BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

IMMORTAL INDIA

Volume II

J. H. Dave

GENERAL EDITORS

K. M. MUNSHI
R. R. DIWAKAR

493

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMBAY

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः।

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side

—Rigveda, I-89-i

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BY

J. H. DAVE

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BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

IMMORTAL INDIA

VOLUME II

BY

J. H. DAVE

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क्रमसंख्या 493
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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay—needed a Book University, a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulsions of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books, 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once. Each book was to contain from 200 to 250 pages and was to be priced at Rs. 2/-.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English, but also in the following Indian languages: Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

This scheme, involving the publication of 900 volumes, requires ample funds and an all-India organisation. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are the reintegration of the Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit:

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions which would allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his own temperament and capacities; we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations, not in any makeshift way, but within the frame-work of the Moral Order; we seek the creative art of life, by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspiration which such books can teach.

In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily accessible to all. Books in other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, as also the movements of the mind in India, which, though they flow through different linguistic channels, have a common urge and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Book University's first venture is the *Mahabharata*, summarised by one of the greatest living Indians, C. Rajagopalachari; the second work is on a section of it, the *Gita* by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and a student of philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed of the *Mahabharata*: "What is not in it, is nowhere." After twenty-five centuries, we can use the same words about it. He who knows it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul; he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life; a philosophy of social and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the *Gita*, which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas in which the climax is reached in the wondrous Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

Through such books alone the harmonies underlying true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the disorders of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

1, QUEEN VICTORIA ROAD,
NEW DELHI:
3rd October 1951

K. M. MUNSHI

SUPPLEMENTARY PREFACE

The *Tirtha* cult is a unique by-product of Indian culture. Rivers, mountains, shrines and holy spots on the banks of rivers, have been sanctified by tradition and association and visit to these places has been considered for centuries as a paramount duty of a Hindu.

This vast movement carrying millions every year to visit sacred *Tirthas* has had the greatest influence in strengthening the religious and cultural foundations of India, in bringing to every man and woman the consciousness of India's glorious past and in inducing a sense of sanctity of the Motherland, unity among her children and turning their mind Godwards.

Shri J. H. Dave has rendered a great service in writing these series of articles, aptly termed "Immortal India" in which the *Tirthas* are described, together with their puranic and other traditions. It presents us a vivid picture of the manner in which the great fabric of Indian culture was reared through the ages by those who visited the *Tirthas*. Incidentally, it also gives an admirable description of the picturesque spots so intimately woven in the collective consciousness of India.

To the modern generation of Indians who have been denied access to the puranic traditions and whose ways of life leave them ignorant of all that is worth knowing in India, this book will be invaluable in understanding what India was and is; for despite the changing content of religious and cultural outlook, the *Tirthas* have remained an essential part of an Indian's life.

K. M. MUNSHI

BOMBAY
29th September 1957

Message from H. H. Sri Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham

॥ श्रीः ॥

श्रीमत्परमहंस परिव्राजकाचार्यवर्य
श्रीमच्छंकरभगवत्पाद प्रतिष्ठित
श्रीकाञ्ची कामकोटिपीठाधिप जगद्गुरु
श्रीमच्चन्द्रशेखरेन्द्रसरस्वती श्रीपादैः

मुम्बापुरीस्थ भारतीयविद्याभवन निर्वाहकाय दवे उपाह्वाय श्री. जयन्त कृष्णशर्मणे क्रियते नारायणस्मृतिः।

भारतीयविद्याभवन प्रकाश्यमानायां पत्रिकायां भवता क्रमशो लिखिता 'अमरभारत' इति नामधरा च लेखावली अधुना संकलीकृत्य ग्रन्थरूपेण प्रकटिता अस्मभ्यं प्रहिता अवालोकि।

अस्मिन् ग्रन्थे भारतीयविविध पुण्यक्षेत्रतीर्थादीनां प्राचीनः इतिहासः इदानींतनपरिस्थितिः, तत्तदनुगुण-

पौराणिकाख्यानग्रथनम् , शिलालेखादिनिर्देशः, तत्तत्तीर्थयात्राविषयः, अन्ये च विविधाः विषयाः सम्यक् प्रतिपाद्यन्ते ।

अयं ग्रन्थः क्षेत्रतीर्थाटनोत्सुकानां तन्महिमजिज्ञासूनां चारित्रकाणां महते उपकाराय भवतीति नितान्तं सन्तुष्यामः ।

विजययात्राख्यानम्   नारायणस्मृतिः
कोलत्तूर
हेमलम्ब वैशाखशुक्लचतुर्दशी.

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Bhagavata, 1-19-8, says:

तत्रोपजग्मु र्भुवनं पुनाना
महानुभावा मुनयः साशिष्याः।
प्रायेण तीर्थाभिगमापदेशैः
स्वयं हि तीर्थानि पुनन्ति सन्तः॥

"The high-souled sages, moving from place to place, purified the whole earth. They came there along with their disciples (to the bank of Ganga, where King Parikshit was fasting unto death). *Under the guise of visiting the Tirthas, these holy men usually purify by their visits, the Tirthas themselves.*"

Bhagavata, 1-13-10, further says: "Bhagavata people like you are *Tirthas* in themselves. As a matter of fact, *it is they who sanctify the Tirthas by their visits as they carry within their hearts the mace-bearing Lord Vishnu.*"

भवद्विधा भागवतास्तीर्थीभूताः स्वयं विभो।
तीर्थीकुर्वन्ति तीर्थानि स्वान्तःस्थेन गदाभृता॥

That is the reason why Skanda 1-2-13-10 says that the main *yatra* is that of going to holy men or to spots habited by or associated with them—it is the *Purusha Yatra* which is principal and merely visiting the geographical spots of the earth is only secondary.

मुख्या पुरुषयात्रा हि तीर्थयात्रानुषङ्गतः।

Mahabharata, Anusasana Parva, Chapter 108, Verses 16-18 says: "Just as certain limbs of the body are purer than others, so are certain places on earth more sacred,—some on account of their situation, others because of their sparkling waters, and others because of the association or habitation of saintly people."

Mahabharata, Vanaparva, 82-13 to 17 further add: "Performance of sacrifices is an elaborate affair involving heavy expenditure which only the princely or the rich can afford—not those without wealth, equipment, wife or priest. Tirtha can be accomplished by all, even the poor, and therefore excels in merit even the best of sacrifices."

Vayu Purana, 77-127, says:

"Those without faith, those full of sins, those with a doubting mind, those who are Godless, and those indulging in bad reasoning--these five types of people can reap no benefit from any *Tirtha*."

Tristhalisetu of Narayana Bhatta quoting Sankha states:

सर्वेषां सर्वतीर्थानि पापघ्नानि सदा नृणाम् ।
परस्परानपेक्षाणि कथितानि मनीषिभिः ॥

"All the *Tirthas*—independently of each other are equally capable of destroying sins." All streams, mounts and rivers are sacred. But Ganga is especially so.

It is stated that by a mere mention of the name of a *Tirtha*, by a bath in the holy waters thereof, and by performing *Tarpana* of the Pitris or ancestors at that place, one destroys sins and acquires merit leading to happiness. The usual rule is to go to a Tirtha, to fast there for 3 days, and make charitable gifts of gold and cows. One not doing so becomes poor. Sometimes it so happens that certain *Tirthas* are inaccessible or very difficult to approach. In such cases, it is stated that one must approach such difficult *Tirthas* through mind, i.e., by contemplating over them.

Garudapurana defines a *Tirtha* as follows:

रजस्तमोविरहितैस्तपसा धूतकल्मषैः ।
यदध्यासितमर्हद्भिस्तद्धि तीर्थं प्रचक्षते ॥

"That Holy spot is known as a *Tirtha*, which is associated with or habited by saints deserving reverence, who are without passion or delusion and who have washed away their sins by the performance of penance."

Tirthas are classified as either *Swayambhuta* like

Prabhasa; or *Nirmita* i.e. constructed by others, like temples, etc. According to another classification, *Tirthas* are either *Daiva* or *Asura* or *Arshaka* or *Manusha.* They may be in heaven or on earth or in Patala. In Mahabharata it is stated that *Naimisharanya* is a *Bhauma Tirtha,* Pushkara is an *Antariksha Tirtha,* and Kurukshetra is a *Tirtha* for all the three worlds, or *Triloka Tirtha.*

It has been noted above that association of godly and saintly people lends holiness to a spot. But one's own subjective approach is equally important.

External cleanliness alone is ineffective without internal purity. That is why it has been aptly stated in Kasi Khanda:

निगृहीतेन्द्रियग्रामो यत्रैव वसते नरः ।
तस्य तत्र कुरुक्षेत्रं नैमिषं पुष्करं तथा ॥

"Wherever a self-controlled man stays, for him there are famous Tirthas like Kurukshetra, Naimisharanya and Pushkara at his very residence."

Merely taking a dip in water is no real *snana* or bath at all. "He is properly bathed, who dips himself into the water of self-control, and who washes away his mental impurity with faith."

स स्नातो यो दमस्नातः श्रद्धाशुद्धमनोमलः ।

One, who is impure, treacherous, cruel, hypocritical, and addicted to sensual pleasures remains sinful and mentally impure, even if he has taken baths in all the *Tirthas.* Making gifts, performance of sacrifice and penance, remaining clean, visits to *Tirthas* and even acquisition of learning are of no avail, if the mind and intention are not pure. One who bathes in the *Manasa* or mental *Tirtha,* where water is purified with contemplation, and where dirt in the form of passion and attachment is washed away, attains the highest path. Removal of mere physical dirt does not make a person pure. It is only on washing away one's mental impurity that one becomes mentally pure. Kasi Khanda adds: "Thousands of watery creatures like fish, etc., are born in water and also die in water, even in the *Tirthas*. But as the required mental approach through purity is lacking in them, none would suggest that these creatures acquire any merit or heaven."

जायन्ते च म्रियन्ते च जलेष्वेव जलौकसः ।
न च गच्छन्ति ते स्वर्गमविशुद्धमनोमलाः ॥

Tirtha yatra is prescribed for people of all the four *asramas*—those of the student, the house-holder, the *vanaprastha* and the *yati*. Similarly, people of all the four *varnas* are asked to undertake the Tirtha yatra. In the case of a house-holder, he should go to *Tirthas* along with his wife, and if he maintains the sacred fire as an Agnihotri, he should also carry that fire with him. It has been stated that various *Manus, Vasus, Rudras, Adityas, Maruts* and other deities, as also the *Sadhyas, Nagas, Yakshas, Rakshasas* and Sages,—all these have attained *Siddhis* through the *Tirthas*.

This ancient land of Bharata was known in very ancient times, according to Bhagavata, by the name of Nabhi Varsha. Swayambhuva Manu's son was Priya-Vrata. His eldest son was Agnidhra, who became the ruler of the entire Jambudweepa. Agnidhra had seven sons and he divided his kingdom between them in seven *khandas* or *varshas*. The first *khanda* or *varsha*, which came to his eldest son Nabhi, being the present 'Bharata Varsha', came to be known after Nabhi as 'Nabhi Varsha'.

This Nabhi desired to have a god-like son. The Lord even though unborn or Aja, was born as Nabhi's son out of grace, in the form of Rishabha Deva, who preached to the world the Paramahamsa Dharma. Since then, this land which was originally known as "Nabhi Varsha," came

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This Nabhi desired to have a god-like son. The Lord even though unborn or Aja, was born as Nabhi's son out of grace, in the form of Rishabha Deva, who preached to the world the Paramahamsa Dharma. Since then, this land which was originally known as "Nabhi Varsha," came to be further known as "Aja Nabha Varsha." Bharata was the eldest son of Rishaba Deva; he was a great yogin and also an equally great king. He retired to the forest; but on account of the attachment he developed for a young one of a deer, he assumed in the next birth the form of a deer. In his third birth he became the famous Jadabharata. Tradition says that this land of India which was so far called "Nabhi Varsha" and "Aja Nabha Varsha" began to be known as "Bharata Varsha" after this famous saintly ruler Bharata. There is another tradition which says that this land came to be known as Bharata after Bharata, the son of Dushyanta and Sakuntala. Brahmanda Purana records a tradition that before India came to be known as Bharata, it was known as Himahva Varsha; Linga Purana says that it was then known as Himavata Varsha. The word India is derived from "Sindhu."

This land of Bharata with all its sacredness is identified with Lord Janardana, who has assumed the form of a Kurma. Bharata is known as *Karma bhoomi* and the sacred literature of India emphatically states that *Parikramana* or a round of this entire country 'Bharata' while visiting its various *Tirthas* is equivalent to taking a round of the entire earth, and it is further considered as one of the best means of acquiring merit.

Pandavas had undertaken a long Tirtha Yatra for the destruction of their sins and for regaining their lost kingdom. They had moved round this entire holy country of Bharata for a long period of 12 difficult years in the company of famous sages and had ultimately fulfilled their ambitions. Sri Balarama, the elder brother of Sri Krishna, had once been to Naimisharanya. At that time, Suta Romaharshana, who was reciting puranas, did not get up to receive him. Balarama in anger killed him. As Romaharshana, though a *suta,* was occupying the position of a reciter of purana, Balarama had incurred a sin equivalent to that of *Brahma-hatya,* and had to perform the necessary *prayaschitta.* One of the main effective *prayaschittas* for one committing *Brahma-hatya* out of ignorance is stated in the Sastras to be the *parikramana* or moving round the whole of Bharata Varsha for a period of 12 months while performing the various religious *vratas,* visiting sacred *Tirthas* on the way and taking baths in their holy waters. Refer to Bhagavata 10-78-40:

ततश्च भारतं वर्षं परीत्य सुसमाहितः।
चरित्वा द्वादश मासांस्तीर्थस्नायी विशुद्ध्यसे॥

Parasurama had killed Sahasrarjuna, who was a king. As he had thus committed *Raja-hatya,* his father Sage Jamadagni recommenided to him the Tirtha yatra of the whole of Bharata Varsha for a period of one year by way of *prayaschitta.* Tirtha Yatra was not only recommended as a *prayaschitta* for *Brahma-hatya* and *Raja-hatya,* it was also recommended to King Yudhishthira after his success in the Mahabharata war in order to recover his *soka,* his sense of guilt, and regaining his lost mental peace. But apart from anything else, one is also recommended to have the *parikramana* of Bharata Varsha just to acquire the grace of God and attain spiritual merit. Vidura, for example, moved round the whole of Bharata without any kind of desire or necessity to perform a *prayaschitta.*

गां पर्यटन् मेध्यविविक्तवृत्तिः
सदाऽऽप्लुतोऽधःशयनोऽवधूतः।
अलक्षितः स्वैरवधूतवेषो
व्रतानि चेरे हरितोषणानि॥
इत्थं व्रजन्भारतमेव वर्षं
कालेन यावद् गतवान् प्रभासम्॥

Bhagavata, 3-1-19 and 20.

Similarly, many Sages, Acharyas, Yogis and religious teachers have made in the past and are making even now a *parikramana* of the whole of Bharata. Mahatma Gandhi moved round the whole Bharata after his return from Africa.

Parts of the Bharata Varsha were known by different names. "The country fixed by Gods and situated between two divine rivers, Saraswati and Drishadvati, is known as Brahmavarta" (Manu 2-17). "Immediately next to Brahmavarta is the country known as Brahma-rishi Desa, consisting of Kurukshetra, Matya, Panchala and Surasena" (Manu 2-19). "The country situated between the two mountain ranges of Himalaya and Vindhya in the North and the South, as also in the east of Kurukshetra and west of Prayaga is known as Madhya Desa" (Manu 2-21). "The country situated between the eastern ocean and the western ocean and between two mountain ranges of Himalayas and Vindhya, is known as Aryavarta," (Manu 2-22). That country is known as "Yajniya" or sacred, where the black antelope moves (Manu 2-23). Aryavarta is also defined in a general manner without reference to any limits. The name Jambudweepa, often identified with India, is a geographical division of the earth, but the name Bharata Varsha is a political and cultural concept indicating common sovereign rulership and identity of cultural ideas from Himalayas to Cape Comorin—"Asetu Himalayat."

कल्पायुषां स्थानजयात् पुनर्भवात् क्षणायुषां भारतभूजयो वरम् ।
क्षणेन मर्त्येन कृतं मनस्विनः संन्यस्य संयान्त्यभयं पदं हरेः ॥
यद्यत्र नः स्वर्गसुखावशेषितं स्विष्टस्य सूक्तस्य कृतस्य शोभनम् ।
तेनाजनाभे स्मृतिमज्जन्म नः स्याद् वर्षे हरि र्यद् भजतां श तनोति ॥

Bhagavata, 5-19-23 and 28 eulogise Bharata as follows:

"It is better to take a birth in Bharata with even a short life rather than enjoy the happiness of heaven for a *kalpa;* the reason is that a man in Bharata, if he is so minded, is capable of attaining the fearless state of the Lord, if he leaves aside all things and thinks even for a short time of the Lord. Therefore, the prayer is that, if there is any merit still left on account of the past performance of sacrifices or good deeds or utterance of good speech, capable of yielding even heaven, let such merit help us in having our next birth in this ancient land of Bharata Varsha, also known as Aja Nabha Varsha, so that we may remember the Lord, who always showers His graces on those who seek Him."

When one undertakes a journey to a *Tirtha,* it has been specifically recommended that one should, as far as possible, go walking. There are numerous advantages of undertaking such journeys by foot. Places, which it is not possible to visit, when one travels in a conveyance, either of the old type or the modern type, can be visited with leisure and advantage on foot. One of the texts says: "A journey to a *Tirtha* by foot is in itself a good penance, and that, if one employs a conveyance, he will lose half of his merit. If he takes advantage of shoes or an umbrella, he will still further reduce his merit. If he carries on business on the way, three-fourths of the merit is gone and by accepting a gift, he loses all merit." However, it has been provided that one, who is not physically well, and undertakes a journey to a *Tirtha* according to his capacity, even by employing a conveyance, does not lose any merit.

Tirtha is a holy place of pilgrimage, especially on or near the bank of a sacred river, or a lake, or near the sea. A *Kshetra* is a sacred spot at other places. Usually, holy shrines of the Hindus are situated on spots, which are attractive on account of the nature around them, for example, on the tops of mountains, near the rivers or the lakes, or the sea, or near the sources of rivers or at secluded places where it is possible to practise penance or concentrate the mind in contemplation.

Lists of sacred mountains, rivers, etc. as also holy spots connected with Siva, Vishnu, Sakti and other deities are given in detail in different Puranas. Below is given a short illustrative list of sacred mountains and rivers in Srimad Bhagavata Purana in its 5th Skandha, Chapter 19.

Mountains

Malaya, Mangalaprastha, Mainaka, Trikuta, Rishabha, Kutaka, Kollaka, Sahya, Devagiri, Rishyamuka, Sri-Saila, Venkata, Mahendra, Varidhara, Vindhya, Suktiman, Rikshagiri, Pariyatra, Drona, Chitrakuta, Govardhana, Raivataka, Kakubha, Nila, Gokamukha, Indrakila and Kamagiri.

Rivers

Candravasa, Tamraparni, Avatoda, Kritamala, Vaihayasi, Kaveri, Veni, Payasvini, Sarkaravarta, Tungabhadra, Krishna, Venya, Bhimarthi, Godavari, Nirvindhya, Payoshni, Tapi, Reva, Surasa, Narmada, Charmanvati, Sindhu, Andha, Sona, Mahanadi, Vedasmriti, Rishikulya, Trisama, Kausiki, Mandakini, Yamuna, Saraswati, Drishadvati, Gomati, Sarayu, Rodhasvati, Saptavati, Sushoma, Satadru, Chandrabhaga, Marudvridha, Vitasta, Asikni and Visva.

Regarding the waters of these rivers, it has been stated that the waters of river Saraswati purify a man after a bath of three days, those of Yamuna after a bath of seven days, those of Ganga immediately on taking the bath; and those of Narmada on their mere sight. Regarding Tapi, it has been stated that merely remembering her purifies a man.

Regarding great rivers meeting the ocean, it has been stated that they are *rajasvala* or dirty in two months when the sun is in Cancer and Leo i.e. in the rainy season. When they are in this condition, usually a bath or Tarpana etc. are to be avoided. But it is provided that this restriction does not apply when one is performing the religious ceremony of *Upakarma*, or offering gifts or libations or taking a bath after a death or on the occasions of solar and lunar eclipses. Similarly, when Jupiter and Venus are in their *asta*, i.e. in combination with the sun, *snana*, *sraddha* etc., in *Tirthas* are to be avoided. But it is specially provided that this restriction does not apply in the case of river Godavari, at Gaya, on the Srisaila mountain and at the time of the Solar and Lunar eclipses. Vayu Purana says that one can offer a *pinda* in *sraddha* at Gaya according to prescribed rites at all times, even though the time happens to be an Adhika Masa or an intercalary month or one's own birthday, or when Jupiter and Venus are in *asta* or combination, or even when Jupiter is in Leo.

One desirous of undertaking a pilgrimage to a *Tirtha* is recommended by Kasi Khanda the following procedure: Before starting he must fast at his residence, offer prayers with devotion to Ganesa and to his own ancestors, and offer salutations to learned brahmins and saintly people. After concluding his fast and eating something in token of such conclusion (Parana), he must start with a pleasant mind and decide to observe certain vows which he must strictly observe. When he returns from the Tirtha Yatra, he should again perform *sraddhas* etc. The fast must be on the previous day and worship of Ganesa on the succeeding day. For the pilgrimage, he is asked to put on a modest dress fit for a pilgrim. Before starting from his village or town it has been recommended that he should take a *pradakshina* of his own village or town. He is asked to strictly avoid acceptance of gifts.

Whenever one goes to any *Tirtha,* the usual rule is that one should get shaved at that place, and should observe a fast. But this rule does not apply in the case of the following four *Tirthas*: Kurukshetra, Visala, Viraja and Gaya. With respect to ladies, particularly those whose husbands are alive, it has been stated that *mundana* or shaving in their case is to be understood as cutting of their braid of hair by only two finger-breadths. The *sraddha* to be performed at *Tirtha* is known as *Ghrita sraddha,* because use of ghee or clarified butter is more prominent in them.

While underaking a Tirtha yatra, one is asked to strictly follow certain disciplinary rules. For example, it is stated that in order to realise the full merit of a Tirtha one must control his hands, feet and mind; HE MUST STUDY THE GREATNESS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE PARTICULAR TIRTHA HE IS VISITING; he must observe the vow of a fast or of eating only once a day and maintain his good character above reproach. "An evil mind is not purified even though one washes himself a hundred times in a *Tirtha,* and he still remains as impure as a vessel containing liquor." "Numerous varieties of fish reside in *Tirthas* like Ganga; so also flocks of birds reside in temples; for want of *bhava* or devotional sentiment in their hearts, they do not acquire any merit either from the *Tirtha* or from the temple. One must therefore approach *Tirthas* only with proper *bhava.*" It is said that in the matter of mantra, tirtha, a learned brahmin, deity, astrologer, doctor and preceptor, one's success is commensurate only with one's own *bhavana*; it is, therefore, necessary to have a proper faith and devotional approach.

When one visits *Tirthas,* he is likely to come in contact with all sorts of people. It has been specifically provided that there are no restrictions of untouchability in a *Tirtha.* "In *Tirthas,* marriages, journeys, battles, sacrifices, revolutions, festivals and when there are big conflagrations, there are no restrictions of untouchability."

While visiting a *Tirtha,* if some other *Tirtha* comes on the way, one is advised not to neglect the latter and asked to perform snana, sraddha etc. even at the latter place. An incidental visit to such other *Tirthas* is said to give additional merit.

There is merit even in proceeding towards a *Tirtha.* It is stated that if after observing the prescribed fast, one starts for a *Tirtha* and unfortunately dies on the way, he is said to go to the Rishimandala after his death.

Even if one cannot avoid going to a *Tirtha* in some conveyance and with shoes on, one is recommended at least to walk some distance on foot; and as soon as the *Tirtha* or the temple is within his sight, he must offer a *sashtanga namaskara;* take out his head dress and then proceed further towards the sacred spot. One is asked to have his first touch of the waters of a *Tirtha* with the pranava mantra; then with proper mantras he is asked to have a complete bath, along with the washing of his clothes (sachaila). He is then asked to get shaved and then after bathing again he is asked to perform the *sraddha* of his ancestors. In order to purify himself he is also required to observe a fast.

There is special merit in having a shave at Prayaga and in giving up one's own body at Banaras. According to one text, shave is prescribed in the following six circumstances: "when one goes for a yatra of Ganga or of Konarak; when there is the death anniversary of his father or his mother; when one keeps sacred fire; and at the time of performing sacrifices." This shaving at *Tirthas* is said to destroy all sins. As observed earlier, in the case of married women whose husbands are alive, it has been prescribed that only two finger-breadths of the braid of hair should be cut.

Snana, Japa, Homa, Sraddha and *Dana* at the Tirthas are said to liberate seven generations of a man. Generally, *snana* etc. are to be performed during the course of the day and not at night; but a *Snana* or *Dana* which is *Naimittika* i.e. which has to be performed on account of some special occasions like the eclipses, marriage, solar *sankranti,* pilgrimage, or some difficulty or at the time of delivery can be performed even at night.

When one takes a bath at a *Tirtha,* he can have it not only for himself but also for his mother, father, wife, brother, friend or preceptor. Whomsoever he remembers at that time is said to acquire one eighth of the merit of a *Snana.* Sage Paithinasi states that one should prepare a small image of the *Darbha* grass of the person whom one intends to benefit and dip that *Darbha* image into the *Tirtha* waters, and it is said that this would give the desired merit to the absent relation or friend.

While taking a bath, even the direction which one should face, is prescribed. One is asked to face that direction, in which the stream flows. This is with regard to the *Tirthas.* In the case of *Kshetras,* one is asked to face the Sun.

After taking this bath one is asked to perform the *Tarpana* of his ancestors.

In Brahma Purana, the following are mentioned as great rivers situated in the south of Vindhya, viz., Godavari, Bhimarathi, Tungabhadra, Venika, Tapi and Payoshni. The following six others are mentioned as great rivers in the north of Vindhya; viz., Bhagirathi, Narmada, Yamuna, Saraswati, Visoka and Vihasta.

The above-mentioned twelve rivers are known as *Mahanadis*. As their designation is *Nadis,* they are supposed to be feminine. The following seven are stated to be *Nadas,* and regarded as masculine. They are: Sona, Sindhu, Hiranya, Koka, Lauhitya, Gharghara and Satadru.

In Padma and Matsya Puranas, *sraddha* in the following *Tirthas* is considered as highly efficacious. These Tirthas are: Gaya, Prayaga, Amarkantaka, Varaha Parvata, River Ganga, Varanasi, Gangadwara, Prabhasa, Bilvaka, Nila Parvata, Kurukshetra, Kubjamra, Bhrigutunga, Mt. Himalaya, Kedara, River Falgu, Naimisharanya, River Sarasvati, Pushkara, River Narmada, Kusavarta, Mt. Sri Saila, Bhadra Karnaka, River Vetravati, River Godavari etc.

Vishnu Dharma sutra also gives a long list of places where *sraddhas* should be performed.

Usually one is asked to perform the *sraddha* only at his own residence and is prohibited from offering *sraddha* to his ancestors at the house of another person. But so far as *Tirthas* are concerned, they are said to belong to nobody and therefore this prohibition of not performing *sraddha* at a place not one's own does not apply to *Tirthas.* "Forests, mountains, rivers, sacred *Tirthas,* temples, sacred lakes etc. belong to nobody."

When one performs a *sraddha* at *Tirthas* he is not to offer any *arghya* or make an *avahana.* There is also no prohibition with respect to *nishiddhakala* or improper time.

In times of difficulty, when there is no fire, when one is visiting a *Tirtha,* when one is having a journey, on the birth of a son, when the wife is in her monthly course and when the sun changes a *rasi,* one may perform a *sraddha* even with uncooked food. But this is secondary and to be performed only when cooked food or proper ingredients of cooked food are not available.

Acceptance of gift is very vehemently prohibited in the texts. "One should not accept any gift at a *Tirtha* even when one is about to die. He who accepts a gift at a *Tirtha* sells all his merit in having gone to a *Tirtha.*" It is further stated that at Ganga, Gaya, Kurukshetra and Amarakantaka, he who gives a gift, shakes off his poverty and he who accepts a gift, purchases poverty for himself.

It has been specifically provided that rules regarding impurities arising out of births and deaths (Sutaka and Mrita-asaucha) do not apply when one goes to a cow-shed or to *Tirthas,* or on the occasions of great *Parvas,* or at the time of eclipses.

Before concluding this short preface on *Tirthas,* it would be proper to quote the following verses which are very relevant:

न काष्ठे विद्यते देवो न शिलायां कदाचन।
भावे हि विद्यते देवस्तस्माद् भावं समाश्रयेत्॥
न देवः पर्वताग्रेषु न देवः शिवसद्मनि।
देवश्चिदानन्दमयो हृदि भावेन दृश्यते॥

"God does not stay either in wood or in stone. He is present only when there is proper *Bhava* or devotional sentiment in the devotee. For this reason, one should have the *Bhava.*" "God does not reside on the tops of mountains, in a Siva temple etc. He is Consciousness and Bliss Incarnate and is seen in one's own heart when there is proper *Bhava.*"

ॐ तत् सत्।

* * *

25. SOMNATH

यत्र गङ्गा च यमुना यत्र प्राची सरस्वती ।
यत्र सोमेश्वरो देवस्तत्र माममृतं कृधीन्द्रायेन्दो परिस्रव ॥

—*Rig Veda, Khila* 20-5.
At the end of the 9th Mandala.

"Make me immortal at the place where the three rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Prachi Saraswati meet and where there is Lord Somnath. O Moon! Shower nectar for Indra."

On 11th May 1951, Vaisaka Sukla Panchami (S.Y. 2007), at 9-47 a.m. (I.S.T.) Rashtrapati Dr. Rajendra Prasad installed the Jyotirlinga of Lord Somnath in the new temple constructed on the historic spot at Prabhasa Patan near Veraval in Saurashtra. It was the same spot and over the same Brahma-sila where for millennia stood the hoary and sacred Jyotirlinga and shrine of God Siva, the first among the twelve famous jyotirlingas, which was held in extreme veneration all over Bharata. Prabhasa is referred to as Somanatha Pattana or Deva Pattana.

This Prabhasa Tirtha is situated on the sea-shore on the south coast of Saurashtra. The seventh Khanda of the *Skanda Purana* is known as the Prabhasa Khanda. In the first 365 Adhyayas it describes the Prabhasa Tirtha, in the next 19 Adhyayas Vastrapatha or Mount Girnar, then in 63 Adhyayas Arbuda or Mount Abu, and in the last 44 Adhyayas Dwaraka.

The 7th Adhyaya of Prabhasa Khanda gives the legendary origin of this Tirtha. It says that Lord Siva has been present in this Tirtha since eternity and will remain so eternally hereafter. Various Brahmas have come and gone. This is the age of the seventh Brahma called Satananda, and Lord Siva is known as Somanatha. Before that in the regimes of the six earlier Brahmas, Lord Siva abode at Prabhasa but Siva was then known by the respective names of Mrityunjaya, Kalagnirudra, Amritesa, Anamaya, Krittivasas and Bhairavanatha. The eighth Brahma hereafter will be known as Chaturvaktra, and Siva will then be known as Prananatha.

The Land of Bharata is conceived of as Janardana who has assumed the body of a Kurma and Saurashtra is its south-west part. Prabhasa is described as the essence of Anarta (Anarta-Sara) a name which is frequently used for Gujarat as a whole.

The Vedic quotation given above is from the *Rig Veda Parisishta* or *Khila* and it says that near Prabhasa flowed the old Saraswati with its two tributaries locally called Ganga and Yamuna. The old *Rig Veda* references to Saraswati make it clear that it started from Plaksha Prasravana in the Himalayas, passed through Marwar, Abu and Gujarat and then met the sea near Prabhasa. *Rig Veda* 7-95-2 says that the pure river Saraswati flows from the mountains to the sea.

एका चेतत् सरस्वती नदीनां
शुचिर्यती गिरिभ्य आ समुद्रात् ।

Skanda, Prabhasa 37-3, says that Prachi Saraswati flows at Kurukshetra Pushkara and Prabhasa, but at Prabhasa yields more merit. Prabhasa Khanda 4-12 describes the area of this Tirtha. The Kshetra of Prabhasa has the area of 12 yojanas; the Kshetra-pitha of 5 yojanas; and the Garbhagriha of a gavyuti or one krosa (about two miles). To the east is situated the temple of Taptodakaswami, in the west of Madhava, to the south is the ocean and to the north is river Bhadra. By worshipping the Jyotirlinga of Someswara, the faithful are promised liberation.

The deity which was known to the Vedic Rishis as Kalagnirudra was designated as Bhairava at Prabhasa. He is also called Agni-Isana. In different Kalpas, this same deity is known by different names (Prabhasa 4-68-73). Somnath has five faces (Prabhasa 6-8). This Somnath is the highest deity called *Hamsa* and *Nada* (Pr. 6-36). The Kalabhairava Linga of Siva at Prabhasa was worshipped by the Moon with great austerity and when the deity was pleased, the Moon prayed for grace that the Lord might be known by the name of his devotee, the Moon, as Somnath and that He should be the Kuladevata of all the successive Moons (Pr. 7-51).

Numerous Rishis and sages have entered the Linga of this deity. Various Siddhis and Mantras have been taught to the world through the grace of this Linga. Many Siddhas adept in the Pasupata Yoga flourished here (Pr. 8, 3 to 13).

In Prabhasa there are five *Sakaras*—Saraswati river, Samudra, Soma (the Lord with His Consort Uma), Somagraha (i.e. the Moon) and the Darsana of Lord Somnath (Pr. 24-37). The Swayambhu Linga of the Lord is situated on the sea-shore in the western quarter about 300 bow-lengths from the Kritasmara Mount. (This mount desired to marry river Saraswati and proceeded to touch her even when she was impure. She asked him to temporarily hold the fire which she was carrying till she became pure after a bath. On catching hold of the fire, Kritasmara was reduced to ashes and his scattered stones were used thereafter by masons for the purpose of building temples).

Near the Somnath temple and in the 1/14th part of its Kshetra, there is a spot of 200 bow-lengths called Karnika and those who die at this spot are promised an abode with the Lord. Prabhasa Khanda 2-82 and 83 describes the Linga of Somnath in this way: "It is a Swayambhu Linga of great prowess, as bright as the disc of the Sun, surrounded by a serpent, of the size of the egg of a hen, called the Sparsalinga and lodged underground."

The legend is that the Moon was married to the 27 daughters of Daksha. He was partial to one of them, Rohini, and neglected others. In spite of a warning from Daksha and the promise of the Moon to treat them all as equals, he continued to exhibit his partiality. Daksha became angry and cursed the Moon to be a consumptive patient. On hearing his entreaties, Daksha said that only Lord Siva could save the Moon. On the advice of Daksha, the Moon came down with Rohini to Prabhasa to worship this Sparsa Linga of Somnath of the size of the egg of a hen (Prabhasa Ch. 21). After a penance of 4000 years, Lord Siva was pleased with the Moon. He was favoured and given strength to grow and shine in the bright half. As the Moon regained his light at this place, it was known as Prabhasa. Brahma himself initiated the Moon and his favourite wife Rohini for establishing the shrine of Somnath. Brahma cleft open the earth and all of them saw the bright Swayambhu Sparsa Linga of Siva of the size of an egg of a hen. It was covered with honey and *darbha* grass. On it was placed the Brahmasila; and over it was established by Brahma Himself the great Linga of Lord Somnath. It was worshipped with Vedic Mantras (Prabhasa 23).

Skanda, Prabhasa 8-11 says that at Somnath there were seven varieties of Gargeyas who were adept in

Pasupata Yoga and were Siddhas. In Prabhasa 24-82 it is stated that Brahmins of the Kausika Gotra undertook to perform the daily worship in the Somnath Temple. The great founder of the Pasupata Sampradaya Lakulisa or Nakulisa flourished at Kayavarohana or Karvan near Baroda in the second century A.D. He had four pupils—Kusika, Gargya, Kaurusha and Maitreya. Lakulisa's Pasupata Sampradaya spread far and wide. The Prasasti in Lakulisa temple of V.S. 1028 near the Ekalingaji Temple in Mewar says that the Pasupata Acharyas there were of Kausika Gotra. The Tripurantaka Prasasti (well-known as Cintra Prasasti) of V.S. 1343 of the time of King Sarangadeva states that the Pasupata Acharyas at Somnath Temple were Gargeyas or of the Garga Gotra,—the Acharyas named Kartika-rasi, Valmika-rasi and Tripurantaka. *Skanda* Prabhasa Khanda, therefore, when it states that Somnath was worshipped by Pasupata Acharyas and Siddhas of Garga and Kausika Gotras, is supported by historical and epigraphical evidence.

Prabhasa Chapters 79 and 177 deal with Lakulisa Mahatmya. Lakulisa is taken to be the Avatara of Siva who entered a dead body at a place called Kayavarohana. He came to Prabhasa from Kayavarohana, performed severe penance, initiated four pupils, taught numerous sastras including Nyaya and Vaiseshika and became an unequalled Siddha. One who offers salutations to the image of this Lakulisa particularly on the Purnima of Kartika is promised abundant wealth for seven births and veneration of gods.

तस्यैव पूर्वदिग्भागे लकुलीशस्तु मूर्तिमान् ।
स्वयं तिष्ठति देवेशि कृत्वा घोरं तपः पुरा ॥
संस्थितः पापशमने तत्र स्थाने स्थलोपरि ।

कार्तिक्यां कृत्तिकायोगे यस्तं पूजयते नरः।
स पूज्यते महादेवि सर्वैरपि सुरासुरैः॥

—*Prabhasa* 177-1 to 3.

In *Mahabharata* Adiparva 238, Arjuna's Yatra of Prabhasa is described. He sees Subhadra there and desires to run away with her. Krishna comes to know of this resolve and helps Arjuna. In Vana Parva 80, Pulastya describes to Bhishma the greatness of various Tirthas. Prabhasa is stated as an abode of sages, where fire or Agni stays eternally. It is noted above that *Skanda* describes Prabhasa as the place of Kalagnirudra who later became known as Somnath. That Rudra is identified with Agni even in the *Rig Veda* and more particularly in later Samhitas needs no mention. As a matter of fact, the whole of *Satarudriya* (T.S. 4-5-1-1 and V.S. 16) is a prayer of Agni when the fire is raging with flames in the Agnichiti and this Agni as Rudra is thereafter propitiated by the pouring of ghee accompanied with the repetition of Vasordhara Mantras (T.S. 4-7-1 to 11 and V.S. 18). *Rig Veda* calls Agni Mahodevah (4-58-3) and Sambhu (7-35-10) and Rudra is identified with Agni (2-1-6) and called Arusha (fiery), Ashalha (unbearable), Ugra (formidable) and Sahamana (strong)—all being the attributes of Agni. In Vanaparva 86, Dhaumya describes the Tirthas of the South to Yudhishthira. In Saurashtra he mentions Chamasodbheda, Prabhasa, Pindaraka and Ujjayanta (Vana 86-20 and 21). In Vana 91-10 Tirthas are described as *Prabhasadini Tirthani,* i.e. Tirthas headed by Prabhasa. Vana 119-15 says that Yudhishthira came down to Prabhasa from Surparaka for his Yatra. He performed penance, fasting completely for 12 days and living only on water and air. Draupadi also joined him in this austerity. He was met there by Krishna and his party. Vana 132-5 says that river Saraswati disappeared near Vinasana and it reappeared near Chamasodbheda in Saurashtra and it was near Prabhasa on the sea-shore that Lopamudra met and married Agastya. (Vana 132-6). In Salya 36 the legend of the Moon-god showing partiality to Rohini and ignoring his other wives is related. As a result of Daksha's curse the Moon became consumptive. On a request to find out a way for cure, Daksha advised the Moon to go to Prabhasa for penance:

समुद्रं पश्चिमं गत्वा सरस्वत्यब्धिसङ्गमम् ।
आराधयतु देवेशं ततः शान्ति अवाप्स्यति ॥ —*Salya* 36-33.

"Let the Moon go to the western sea (in Saurashtra) where river Saraswati meets the sea and worship Devesa (i.e., Isana or Siva). Then alone will the Moon-God regain his light."

Here the *Mahabharata* also clearly mentions that the Moon worshipped Lord Siva at Prabhasa which was even then a Saiva Tirtha. The Moon had his bath there on the Amavasya or the New-Moon day before he regained strength and light. Because the Moon regained light here, and was enabled to increase in the bright half and so once again brighten the earth, this Tirtha is known as Prabhasa. Prabhasa is also referred to as a select Tirtha in Anusasana 64-9 and 143-2. In Asvamedhika 84-12, it is stated Arjuna again came to Prabhasa. It was near Prabhasa that the Yadavas got drunk, fought amongst themselves and were destroyed. Krishna was released from his mortal coils near Prabhasa at a place called Dehotsarga.

Somnath is connected with Soma or the Moon because the legend says that the moon established here the first shrine of Lord Siva. Soma also means Siva in association with his consort Uma. The 8th Anuvaka of *Satarudriya* begins with *Namah Somaya Cha Rudraya Cha.* There

Soma has been unanimously interpreted as Siva linked with Uma. *Brihajjabala* Upanishad 2-3 says that

अग्नीषोमात्मकं विश्वम् ।

"The whole universe is a combination of Agni and Soma."

Here Agni represents the luminous aspect of Siva and Soma represents the aspect of Sakti or Uma full of nectar (Amritamaya). There is nothing in the Universe which is not pervaded by Siva and Sakti.

तदित्थं शिवशक्तिभ्यां नाव्याप्तमिह किञ्चन ।

—Brihajjabala 2-12.

Bhasma is the Virya of Agni or Siva. Mixed with water, it is symbolised as the Amrita of Sakti. This Upanishad says:—

शिवशक्त्यमृतस्पर्शे लब्ध एव कुतो मृतिः ।

"How can there be death when one is touched with the Virya of Siva and Amrita of Sakti?"

It further says:

शिवाग्निना तनुं दग्ध्वा शक्तिसोमामृतेन यः ।
प्लावयेद् योगमार्गेण सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥

—Brihajjabala 2-19.

"He attains immortality who with yogic practices burns his body with the fire of Siva and is sprinkled over with the nectar of Sakti Soma."

Prabhasa Khanda 6-36 describes Somnath as *Hamsa*. It is the same as Soma—Siva conjoined with Uma or Sakti.

हंसौ तौ पुम्प्रकृत्याख्यौ हं पुमान् प्रकृतिस्तु सः ।

—*Saradatilaka*, 15-51.

In Hamsa 'Ha' represents Purusa and 'Sa' represents Prakriti. When Prakriti, realising that Purusha is her resort, merges in Him, Hamsah becomes Soham. By dropping the consonants 'S' and 'H' what remains is the Pranava Mantra 'OM'. In the same 8th Anuvaka of *Satarudriya* which says *Namah Somaya Cha Rudraya Cha,* Siva is further prayed as *"Namah Taaraaya"*—where Taara means the liberating Pranava mantra 'OM'.

Mahabharata in Salya 36 significantly says that after performing penance at Prabhasa, the Moon-God took his bath there on the Amavasya day and then with Siva's grace acquired a beautiful i.e. Darsa or Darsaniya body (Amavasya is known as Darsa).

With this another legend is connected. Sati when insulted by her father Daksha, threw herself into fire and was reborn as Uma. Sati is identified with Soma or Chandra and Siva or Agni with the Sun (the Celestial Agni). On Amavasya day, Sati or the Moon merges or is burnt in the Sun (the celestial fire) i.e. Siva and emerges as the New Moon or Uma. (See Prabhasa Khanda Ch. 19). Siva is identified in *Satarudriya* with the Sun and it is stated that He is red, then slightly red, then tawny and then auspicious as He gradually rises in the sky; and even ignorant cowherd boys, water-carrying women of the villages and all creatures including cattle can see Him.

असौ यस्ताम्रो अरुण उत बभ्रुः सुमङ्गलः ।
उतैनं गोपा अदृशन्नदृशन्नुदहार्यः ।
उतैनं विश्वा भूतानि स दृष्टो मृडयातु नः ।

—T.S. 4-5-1. 2 and 3.

Whether the Indus Valley civilization is taken as pre-Vedic or post-Vedic, we find there the worship of a God similar to the Vedic Rudra-Siva. He is also Pasupati and in Yogic pose. Saivism in Gujarat and Nepal has affinities. See Bom. Gaz., Vol. I, part 1, p. 84. Nepal Kings were Saivas, called themselves Paramamahesvaras and had, like the Valabhi Kings of Gujarat, a bull on their seals.

Both the Valabhi and Nepal Kings bow to the feet of Bappa which appears to be the title of Saivite Pontiffs. The temple of Pasupati in Nepal was already in existence when Asoka visited the Valley in 250 B.C. In the later Vedic period, in the 10th book of the *Taittiriya Aranyaka*, there are five mantras of Sadyojata, Vamadeva, Aghora, Tatpurusha and Isana on which the Lakulisa Pasupata Darsana is based. This Darsana is systematically stated in the *Pasupata Sutras* with the commentary of Kaundinya (Published in 1940 by the University of Travancore). The story of how these sutras were written by Lakulisa, the incarnation of Siva and born at Kayavarohana near Baroda in Gujarat, is stated in *Vayu* and *Kurma Puranas.*

From the Mathura Pillar inscription of Chandragupta II dated 380 A.D. we learn that Uditacharya was the 10th in succession from Kausika, one of the four pupils of Lakulisa. The statement that Kausika was one of Lakulisa's pupils is supported by Vayu and Kurma as also by the Cintra Prasasti of Tripurantaka of S.Y. 1343. Lakulisa must therefore have flourished in about the 2nd century A.D.

Skanda says that Lakulisa came to Prabhasa and preached the Pasupata Darsana. Authors of Nyaya and Vaiseshika systems are said to be Pasupatas.

The Bhara-Siva and Vakataka rulers were Saivas. Most of Kshatrapa kings of Gujarat with names beginning with Rudra appear to be Saivas. A great majority of Valabhi rulers called themselves Parama Mahesvaras. Pratihara Gurjaras came to worship Somnath. The Solankis of Gujarat were mostly Saivas. It is clear that from the time of at least the Kshatrapa rulers up to the 14th century, the Pasupata cult was very much in vogue in Gujarat. Somnath was the principal seat of this Sampradaya. Gujarat was the birth-place of Lakulisa, the founder of the

Pasupata system. The image of Lakulisa was installed in Prabhasa and it is also found at several other places in Gujarat and in the South. Numerous famous Saiva Siddhas and Acharyas flourished here as is evidenced by *Skanda* and the inscriptions.

Mahmud of Gazni looted and destroyed this historic shrine in 1025 A.D. It was immediately reconstructed by Bhima and Bhoja, the rulers of Gujarat and Malva. Emperor Siddharaja Jayasimha abolished the tax on pilgrims visiting this shrine in obedience to the wishes of his mother. His successor, king Kumarapala, had the shrine widely extended and repaired, came down walking with Yati Hemachandra to Somnath from Anhilpur Panan; and had the great foundation ceremony performed through Bhava Brihaspati who was then honoured with the title of Ganda. He was a Kanya-Kubja brahmin and had rebuilt many Saiva temples. King Bhima added two spacious Mandapas. The great Pasupata Acharya Tripurantaka built the majestic temple of Somnath again and established five more Saiva temples in Prabhasa. The Cintra Prasasti of Tripurantaka gives in detail his associations with the Pasupata line of Acharyas. In 1300 A.D. Alaf Khan, the general of Ala-ud-in Khilji, destroyed the shrine and it was shortly rebuilt by king Mahipala of the Chudasama dynasty. Muzaffar Shah I, Mahomed Begda, Muzaffar II and Aurangzeb destroyed the shrine respectively in 1390 A.D., 1490 A.D., 1530 A.D. and 1701 A.D. Each time it was soon restored. In 1783 A.D. Queen Ahalyabai built a new temple nearby. On May 11, 1951 A.D. Dr. Rajendra Prasad installed the Jyotirlinga of Somnath on the same Brahmasila on which several earlier temples were built, as mentioned in history.

The Lakulisa system is also detailed in the Sarvadarsana Sangraha of Madhava as the Nakulisa Darsana.

Vayu and *Kurma* say that Siva incarnated himself in the beginning of the Kali Age in a village called Karavan on the banks of the Narmada. He was born into an Agnihotri family of Atri *gotra*. He went to Ujjain and there taught his first pupil Kusika, a brahmin of the Brahmavarta country; and while he was teaching, Lakulisa composed the Pasupata Sutras. They are 168 in number in five sections called Sadyojata, Vamadeva, Aghora, Tatpursa and Isana. The Sutras preach on how to worship the God and have His Sayujya. Kaundinya (4th to 6th century A.D.) composed a Bhashya on these sutras. *Ganakarikas* of Haradattacharya (800 A.D.) with their Vyakhya by Bhasarvajna (Gaekwar Oriental series No. 15) is another work of the Pasupata School. The Nyaya and Vaiseshika Sutras and Bhashyas are also treated as Pasupata literature. Kaundinya quotes, without naming, numerous authors. Some Saiva Puranas and Agamas also contain Pasupata literature.

The Pasupata Darsana of Lakulisa is Bheda-Abheda Vada or Dualism-cum-Monism. It believes in the five primary categories of Karana, Karya, Yoga, Vidhi and Duhkhanta. Its liberation is not merely the cessation of pain but positive attainment of divine Supremacy. The Karya consists of Kalaa, Vidya and Pasu—they are all eternal virtues. The system is based on the 10th book of the *Taittiriya Aranyaka*. This system of Lakulisa does not accept Dasatva of the Lord as Moksha but states that Moksha consists in attaining all the attributes of the Supreme Being Himself.

The prosperity of the Somnath temple is described by Mohamedan historians. Water came daily for the Lord from the Ganges and flowers from Kashmir. About 10,000 villages were endowed for the maintenance of the temple. This was the most sacred and the biggest temple in India in the days of Mahmud of Gazni. On every eclipse day lacs of pilgrims gathered there. Richest presents were offered to the Lord. A thousand brahmins were engaged in the daily worship. Three hundred barbers used to shave the pilgrims. About 350 dancing girls were engaged for dancing and music. The garbhagriha was lighted by jewelled lamps and the huge bell was rung with a chain of solid gold of 200 maunds in weight. In the treasure room, there were numerous subsidiary images and equipment of gold, silver and jewels. The temple had 56 pillars all studded with gems.

हृदि स्थितं चिन्मयमात्मवेदिनः समाधिमास्थाय विलोकयन्ति यम् ।
स चित्तसन्तापमपाकरोतु वः स्तनन्धयश्वेतमयूखभूषणः ॥

—Cintra Prasasti of Tripurantaka Verse I.

"Those who have realised the Atma after attaining the Samadhi see Lord Siva as All-Consciousness seated in their heart. May this Lord who has the ornament of the crescent moon remove all your worries afflicting the mind!"

तदेव गर्भस्य गृहं च सा शिला यथातथं द्वित्रसहस्रवत्सरान् ।
अधस्तनस्योपरि यत्र नूतनः पुराणमूर्तेर्गरिमा प्रकाशते ॥

—*Somastavaraja*, Verse 39.

It is the same Garbhagriha (or the inner chamber) and the Brahmasila (or the stone on which the Jyotirlinga is installed) as it was for the last two or three thousand years. Above the lower layer now shines the new glory and greatness of the Lord of Ancient Manifestation.

26. BHUVANESVAR

तथा चैवोत्कलदेशे कृत्तिवासा महेश्वरः ।
सर्वपापहरं तस्य क्षेत्रं परमदुर्लभम् ।।
लिङ्गकोटीसमायुक्तं वाराणस्याः समं शुभम् ।
एकाम्रकेति विख्यातं तीर्थाष्टकसमन्वितम् ।।

—*Brahma Purana.*

"In Utkala or Orissa there is the Kshetra of Lord Siva Krittivasas. It removes all sins, and such places are difficult to come across. It has a crore of Siva Lingas and is equal in merit to Banaras. It is known as Ekamra and has eight principal tirthas."

Bhuvaneshvar is situated in the Khurda sub-division of the Puri District, 20° 15′ N. and 85° 50′ E. Its old name is "Ekamra Tirtha". This place was a great centre of Saivism in Orissa and was considered a rival of the famous Banaras. In the records of the temple of Jagannath, the first mention of Bhuvanesvar dates back to the reign of Yayati Kesari, the great Kesari king of Orissa. In his day the place was mainly occupied by Buddhists in the east particularly on the Dhauli Hill and in the west on the hills of Khandagiri and Udayagiri. The caves and the various inscriptions of this locality testify to this fact.

It is said that this Saiva king Yayati Kesari changed his capital from Jaipur to Bhuvanesvar and started constructing the great temple of Bhuvanesvar—that of Krittivasas or Lingaraja. Tradition says that his grandson Lalatendu Kesari completed this temple of Lord Siva in 588 Sakabda i.e. 666 A.D. Bhuvanesvar remained the capital of the Kesari kings till Nripati Kesari founded Cuttack in the 10th century and made it his capital.

Bhuvanesvar is known as the city of temples and shrines. Tradition says that around the lake there were 7,000 shrines of which about a hundred alone are now extant. But what remains reveals the wonderful art of Orissa.

Tradition says that those who intend to have the Yatra of Lord Jagannath should first visit this Ekamra Tirtha and then proceed alone to Jagannath Puri. It is said that even Shri Chaitanya first had the Darsana of Lord Lingaraja before he went to Puri and that without this prior Darsana the Yatra of Puri is futile.

Pauranic legend says that this Ekamra Kanana was a more favourite resort of Siva than Kasi and this fact was once revealed by Siva to Parvati. The latter then came to this spot out of curiosity in the form of Gopalini or a cowherd woman. Two demons named Kritti and Vasa came up to her and desired to marry her. She asked them first to carry her on their shoulders. When they did, these two demons were crushed under the superhuman weight of the Goddess. After destroying them, the Goddess felt thirsty and Lord Siva dug for her the Lake called Bindu Saras or Bindu Sagar. Siva invited all the sacred rivers, lakes, etc., to lend to this lake one drop of water each —which all of them did except the river Godavari. She was cursed but she subsequently propitiated Siva and got her curse modified.

The Bindu Sagar also called the Gosagar is 1400′× 1100′. A pilgrimage to Bhuvanesvar starts with a bath in this lake. A ceremonial bath with Sraddha and Tarpana is considered highly meritorious. A bath on days of eclipse, Sankranti and other auspicious occasions yields abundant merit. After a bath at this place one is recommended to have a Darsana of Ananta-Vasudeva who is considered the Kshetrapati of this place. After worshipping Ganapati, the Gopalini Devi, Skanda, the Bull of the Lord, etc., one should enter the great Shrine of Lingaraja —the Lord of the 3 worlds—Tribhuvana—abbreviated as Bhuvanesvar. Worship is performed as detailed in the *Brahma Purana.* The worship can be performed both by Agama and Vaidika mantras. The reward is stated to be a place in heaven followed by a birth in the next life as a Yogin and one is promised then the realisation of the Pasupata Yoga and final liberation.

The *prasada* of Bhuvanesvar cannot be refused by anyone and like that of Jagannath this Prasada also does not get polluted by the touch of anyone, whether a brahmin or a *chandala.* It is accepted by all with great devotion ignoring all distinctions of castes and creeds. Usually what is dedicated to a Sivalinga is not accepted for one's enjoyment, but an exception is made in the case of the Jyotirlingas and also in the case of the Lingaraja here. It is further said that Lingaraja in Bhuvanesvar is not only Siva but is a combination of Hari and Hara and therefore acceptance of His Prasada is highly meritorious.

The great temple of Lingaraja or Krittivasas contains three inscriptions of Anangabhima III. One of them is dated 1224 A.D. It is surmised that the Vimana and the Jagamohana of the temple were built at the same time but the Natyamandira was added at a much later date. The temple of Lingaraja is ascribed to a mythical king Yayati Kesari, and Sri R. D. Bannerji thinks that he was probably the same as Mahabhava Gupta Janamejaya. According to Sri Bannerji, the Parasuramesvara temple at Bhuvanesvar was built about the middle of the 8th century and the Lingaraja about two centuries later.

At present the Lingaraja, the Ananta-Vasudeva and a few other temples consist of Vimana, Jagamohana, Nata-mandira and the Bhoga-mandapa; in other words, of one sanctum and three Mandapas.

The Bhuvanesvar temples are classified into three groups by Sri Bannerji—the first group consists of Parasuramesvara and Muktesvara. A few other temples at Bhuvanesvar and those at Baudh and Khiching form the second group; while the temples of Lingaraja and Ananta-Vasudeva form the third group. The Orissa style of architecture was originally described as that belonging to the Nagari or Indo-Aryan class out of the three—(1) Nagara (2) Dravida (3) Vesara classified by Fergusson as the Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Chalukyan. Sri Bannerji states that the Orissan temple-type is not Nagari at all and that it is a separate Kalinga style altogether.

Among the mediaeval temples of Orissa, the temple of Parasuramesvara at Bhuvanesvar is the oldest. From its style of ornamentation and the inscription on the Navagraha slab there, it is assigned to the 8th century.

The Lingaraja is the biggest temple in a spacious compound of 520′ x 465′. The temple of Bhagavati is situated at the north-west corner of the compound of Lingaraja. The linga of Lingaraja or Krittivasas is a huge uncarved block of granite 8 feet in diameter and rising 8 inches above the level of the floor. It is surrounded by a rim of black chlorite, the rim or the *yoni* tapering to a point in the north direction. This temple is considered to be the finest example of a purely Hindu temple in India. Lord Siva is offered 22 daily services of rituals and bathed with water, milk and Bhang. From rousing the Lord in the morning up to Sayana, these rituals are daily performed with elaboration.

The great tower is 180 feet high and is considered finer in design than that at Tanjore. Every part of it is most elaborately carved. Every stone in the tower has some pattern carved on it. The sculpture is considered to be of a very high order and of great beauty of design. The Vimana and the Jagamohana of this shrine are the most stupendous structures at present existing in Orissa. Twelve *Sardulas* support the dome. On the ribbed dome is placed the Kalasa.

The Bindu Sagar is situated to the north of this temple. In the centre is the Jalamandir where the Lord is brought once a year to bathe.

On the eastern bank of Bindu Sagar is the Shrine of Ananta-Vasudeva. One of the inscriptions there says that Bhavadeva Bhatta of Bengal repaired the Shrine. The temple is sacred to Krishna and Balarama.

Further east is the temple of Brahmesvara and to the north east is the old ruined temple of Bhaskareswara.

The temple of Raja Rani has been very highly spoken of by Fergusson: "It is one of the gems of Orissa art." The figures in the niches are executed with great vigour and elegance. To the west of the Raja-Rani temple is the Siddharanya with a large group of temples. Important temples there are those of Mukteswara, Kedaresvara, Siddhesvara and Parasuramesvara.

Muktesvara is considered the most handsome, though a small temple. The *torana* here has elaborate carvings. The bas-reliefs, the statues and the floral designs in this temple are considered exquisite. The Kedaresvara and Siddhesvara temples are considered to be earlier in date than that of Lingaraja. The Parasuramesvara is the oldest.

It is believed that from the time of Kapilendra the importance of the Ekamra Tirtha of Bhuvanesvar declined, and the kings became the representatives of Lord Jagannath alone to the exclusion of Krittivasas of Bhuvanesvar or Vimala of Jaipur or Kinchikesvari of Kiching.

The magnificent shrines of Bhuvanesvar have strangely escaped destruction by the Mughals and other Muslim Rulers.

Apart from Bindu Sagar, there are other lakes like Sahasralinga and Papanasini also.

Almost six miles to the south-west of Bhuvanesvar is the village of Dhauli. On the hill there are rock edicts of Asoka and an elephant originally designed as an emblem of Buddha. These edicts are well preserved in spite of exposure to the sun and storms for more than 2000 years.

About three miles from Bhuvanesvar is the Khandagiri Hill with its three peaks of Udayagiri, Khandagiri and Nilgiri. There are 44 caves in Udayagiri, 19 in Khandagiri and 3 in Nilgiri. On Udayagiri there is Rani ka Nahar or the Queen's palace (traditionally supposed to be that of the wife of Lalatendu Kesari) which is very richly carved. The Swargapuri cave, the Ganesa Gumpha, the Jaya Vijaya Cave, the Vaikuntha Cave, the Hathi Gumpha, the Pavana Gumpha and the Bagh Gumpha, all of them contain ancient figures and carvings. In the Udayagiri Caves there are many Buddhist designs. On the Khandagiri there is a range of Jaina caves.

''The age of temple building was particularly over in Orissa in the beginning of the 11th century,'' says Sri R. D. Bannerji and adds: ''the art of the decorator reached the highest standard of excellence between the dates of the construction of the Vimana and Jagamohana of the Muktesvara; comparatively speaking the decorative art of the Jagamohana is higher in standard than the Vimana. At the same time the decorator of the Jagamohana of the Muktesvara had reached a much higher level in his own art than that of the Vimana and the Jagamohana of the Lingaraja or Krittivasa. Here perhaps for the first time we find human figures as decorative motifs placed in altorelievo against the walls of the Jagamohana.... The Vimana and the Sikhara of the Krittivasa and Ananta Vasudeva curve suddenly towards the end near the Amalaka, and the *Jagamohana* is a rectangular chamber with a stepped pyramid as a roof.''

यस्तत्र तीर्थं विधिवत् करोति नियतेन्द्रियः।
कुलैकविंशमुद्धृत्य शिवलोकं स गच्छति ॥

यस्मिंस्तस्मिंस्तिथौ विप्राः स्नात्वा बिन्दुसरोऽम्भसि ।
पश्येद्देवं विरूपाक्षं देवीं च वरदां शिवाम् ॥

गणं चण्डं कार्तिकेयं गणेशं वृषभं तथा ।
कल्पद्रुमं च सावित्रीं शिवलोकं स गच्छति ॥

एकाम्रके शिवक्षेत्रे वाराणसीसमे शुभे ।
स्नानं करोति यस्तत्र मोक्षं स लभते शुभम् ॥

—*Brahmapurana*.

''One who performs the yatra here with due ceremonies and with his senses controlled liberates his 21 generations and goes to the abode of Siva. On any day one may take a bath in the Bindusaras and have the Darsana of (1) Siva (2) Parvati (3) Chanda (4) Kartikeya (5) Ganesa (6) the Bull of Siva (7) Kalpavriksha and (8) Savitri. On having the Darsana of these eight one goes to Sivaloka. This Ekamra is the Siva Kshetra as sacred as Kashi and one taking a bath here is assured of liberation.''

27. AMARNATH OF KASHMIR

दुग्धाब्धिधवलं तेन सरो दूरगिरौ कृतम् ।
अमरेश्वरयात्रायां जनैरद्यापि दृश्यते ।।

—Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* 1-267..

"The Susravasa Naga then constructed in the distant mountain a lake as white as the ocean of milk. Even now that lake is seen by people who go out for a pilgrimage of Amarnath."

Poet Kalhana was a contemporary of king Jayasimha of Kashmir who reigned from 1129 to 1150 A.D. He is the author of the well-known *Raja-Tarangini*, the chronicle of the kings of Kashmir. In the above-mentioned verse he refers to the Yatra of Amarnath which was famous even in his time as well as to the lake constructed by the Susravasa Naga.

The story of this Naga as stated by Kalhana in the first Taranga (Verses 197 to 270) is as follows:

King Vibhishana II of Kashmir was succeeded by his son, Nara. This Nara ruled in the city of Kinnaragrama and though virtuous otherwise, was lax in morals and he subsequently behaved very badly. One Sramana with the help of his Yogic powers abducted his Queen and the angry king took his revenge. In one of the Gardens near the river Vitasta there was a lake in which a Naga, Susravasa by name, resided. He had two handsome daughters, Iravati and Chandralekha. The Naga was having a bad time on account of the evil machinations of some Mantric Sadhu. A brahmin, named Visakha, relieved the Naga of his anxieties, and the Naga in his gratitude gave Visakha his daughter, Chandralekha, in marriage. Visakha and his wife lived happily for a time in the capital of King Nara. One day a stray horse entered Chandralekha's compound and started eating the grains spread out by her in the sunlight. While trying to check the horse, she patted it and left a golden imprint of her hand on the back of the horse.

King Nara was already enamoured of her and this story of the imprint of the golden palm raised his fever of passion. He tried to secure her but all his efforts failed. He shamelessly asked her husband, Visakha, to hand her over to him but in vain. Nara besieged their house but the couple escaped and approached the Susravasa Naga. The Naga was highly enraged and he burnt the entire city of King Nara and destroyed him. The Naga was unhappy then at the massacre of the innocent people and left the place. He constructed a lake on the Duragiri or the distant mountain and this lake mentioned by Kalhana is identified with the Seshanaga Lake between Chandanwadi and Wavjan on the way to the Yatra of Amarnath. The Naga also constructed another lake called the Jamatri Saras for his daughter and son-in-law.

Kalhana's chronicles are based on *Nilamatapurana*, *Harvijaya* and other works. Kalhana starts his story from Gonanda I who was a friend and contemporary of Jarasandha and the opponent of Krishna, and brings the history down to his own time, the middle of the twelfth century. Jonaraja, Srivara and Prajyabhatta have brought down the chronicles up to the end of the sixteenth century when Akbar occupied Kashmir.

Damodara, son of Gonanda I, was killed by Yadavas. His wife Yasomati, who was then carrying, was however placed on the *gadi* of Kashmir by Krishna and rejecting the proposal of annexing the kingdom of Kashmir, Krishna said:

कश्मीरा पार्वती तत्र राजा ज्ञेयः शिवांशकः।

—*Kalhana's Rajatarangini* 1-72.

"*The land of Kashmir is Parvati incarnate and the ruler of that country is the Amsa or Particle of Siva.*"

Tradition says that in olden days the Valley of Kashmir was a lake called *Sati-Saras,* named after Siva's consort Parvati. This Satisaras in the Himalaya region was infested by lake demons who used to destroy the human beings residing nearby. Sage Kasyapa, the grandson of Brahma, destroyed these demons and their leader Jalodbhava. After this, sage Kasyapa converted this land of the lake into what is now known as the "*Kashmira Mandala*" (Kalhana, 1-25 to 27). In this land where there are temples to Chakrabhrit Vishnu and Vijayesa Siva, there is not an inch of space which is not a Tirtha. (*R.T.* 1-38). Kashmir is famous for learning, lofty buildings, saffron, frozen water, and grapes (*R.T.* 1-42).

In the north-eastern direction from Srinagar at a distance of about 86 miles and on a height of about 13,000 feet from sea-level is the famous cave of Amarnath where Lord Siva is worshipped in the form of linga-shaped ice-blocks made by the drops of water oozing naturally in the cave. Some people believe that this is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas called Amaresvara. The mountains round about this cave are higher still by about 5,000 feet. Some of the peaks are constantly covered with snow even in summer. The sacred cave of Amarnath is not a man-made temple or even a cave artificially carved out. It is an open rugged door-less cave constructed by nature.

The Yatra of Amarnath is considered very beneficial, sacred, and capable of rewarding one with liberation; and pilgrims from all over Bharata visit this spot as zealously as they visit Kasi Visvesvara, Badarivisala, Kedaranath and other celebrated places. Pilgrimage to this place is pretty difficult and according to tradition, this sacred spot has been the resort of numerous Sages, Rishis and Saints.

Tradition says that in every lunar month from the first of the bright half, the ice-block starts forming into a Siva-linga and on the full-moon day of each lunar month, the linga of ice is completely formed by the dripping of water in the cave; from the first day of the dark half of each month, this linga of ice starts decreasing and on the Amavasya or the new-moon day, the Linga vanishes completely. Again the process starts in the next month and so on. It is said that Lord Siva first appeared in this cave on the full-moon day of Sravana and therefore there is a special merit in going on a pilgrimage to Amarnath on this day which falls in the month of August. Up to the month of Sravana, there is snow and the way to Amarnath is not very clear. Shortly after Sravana the winter starts. The month of Sravana is therefore the most convenient time for the yatra.

Every year a big procession starts from Srinagar on the fifth of the bright half of Sravana. This procession is led on foot by H.H. the Sankaracharya of Saradapeeth in Kashmir. Along with the procession a big silver stick called the Danda or the Chhadi with God Siva's standard is also carried. Sadhus, Nagas, Mahants, Saints, Veragis, Sannyasins of all types, householders and a number of people with faith gather together on this day in Srinagar from distant parts of India. This annual Sangha for Amarnath is given all assistance by the State and is looked after by the Dharmarth department of the Kashmir Government. This Dharmarth department with its staff, police, clothing, tents, travelling dispensaries, etc., accompanies the pilgrim parties and the state spends about

Rs. 30,000 on arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the pilgrims.

The Sangh starts from Srinagar (5,260 feet) and reaches Pampur in South-East at a distance of about 9 miles on the first day of the *yatra* and stays there overnight. Pampur is famous for saffron fields from which saffron is collected on Asvin Purnima in October. The second stop is at Avantipur, 9 miles further South-East. The third stop is at Brijbihara. From here the pilgrims pass *via* Anant Nag (5,300 ft.) and the spring of Gautama-Nag and arrive at Mattan or Martand. Pilgrims worship the Sun-god here and perform *sraddhas.* The Pandas of Amarnath reside at Mattan. Pilgrims are received and given necessary facilities by them. Martand is the famous Surya-Kshetra. The ruins of the celebrated Martand temple are situated on a lofty plateau about 5 miles from Anant-Nag. It commands an excellent view. It is styled as "the architectural lion on Kashmir". The temple consists of a courtyard with the principal shrine in the centre, surrounded by a graceful colonnade of 84 columns. It is one of the most finished temples with artistic carvings, sculptures and arches. It was built by King Lalitaditya of Kashmir in the middle of the eighth century.

From Mattan or Martand, the pilgrim parties come to Aishmukam. At this place there is a Muslim shrine. At Ganeshpur, 2½ miles away from here, are the headquarters of the Martand Canal works. About three miles further north is Batkut. One-third of the offerings from pilgrims collected at Amarnath go to the Mahomedans of this village of Batkut. Pilgrims then reach Pahalgam (7,200 ft.) about 59 miles from Srinagar. Here there is the confluence of the Liddar and Seshnag rivers where the pilgrims take their bath. Pahalgam is reached on the tenth of the bright half of Sravan and the whole party starts from this place further up on the twelfth of the bright half of the same month.

From Pahalgam the pilgrims can hire Kandis, Dandis, labour, tents, etc., for going further up. In the *sangh* of Sravan many arrangements are easily available. One can visit Amarnath even on Ashadha or Bhadrapada Purnima or on any other suitable date but then one has to make one's own arrangements.

From Pahalgam to Amarnath there are four main stops. The first is at Chandanwadi, the next is at Wavjan, the third is at Panchatarni and the fourth is the Amarnath cave.

Chandanwadi, about 8½ miles from Pahalgam, is 9,500 feet high. It is four miles away from the Asthan Marg stream. From here one can see the confluence of Asthan Marg stream and Seshnag. One and a half miles further up is the ascent to Pishu Ghati. The forest ends here. Pishu-Ghati is the Peshana mount, so called because the demons are supposed to have been crushed here by the gods and the hill is said to represent the heap of their bones. From here the pilgrims come *via* Zozipal to the lake of Seshnag, 11,730 feet high. This lake is 500 feet below the level of the road and is situated in the icy lap of the Kohenhor glacier (17,000 feet). This lake is fed by the water of melted snow from these glaciers. The river Seshnag flows from this lake in beautiful cascades. In order to reach the lake, one has to get down nearly one mile away from the road. This lake is said to be as deep as Patala and the resort of Sesha Naga. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* 1-267 quoted above refers to this lake on the way to Amarnath.

From here the pilgrims arrive at Wavjan (12,300 feet). Here they have to cross and re-cross the ice-bridge. From here up to Mahagunus begins the steep ascent. Mahagunus Pass is at a height of 14,000 feet. From here right up to Panchatarni (12,015 feet) people have to walk on the snow and proceed down a very steep and continuous descent.

Panchatarni is about four miles away from Amarnath. Many pilgrims leave behind their extra luggage at Panchatarni and collect it on their return journey from Amarnath.

Pilgrims reach the Amarnath cave on Sravan Purnima to worship the ice-image of Sivalinga in the cave at the height of 12,929 feet. The cave is about 150 feet high and 90 feet broad. It appears that the walls of the cave are made of gypsum. Except for a small area, the roof of the cave is leaking. There are two holes in the northern wall of the cave from which water trickles out and freezes into ice as soon as it appears. One of the holes is bigger and below that a huge snow-*linga* is formed and this is the famous snow-image of Lord Amarnath.

On the left side of this *linga* there is another ice formation called Ganesh and on the right side one of Parvati and Bhairava. The cave faces south and the rays of the Sun do not fall directly on the image of Amarnath and that is why perhaps the snow image does not melt away in summer. The traditional story that the snow image gets formed every lunar month in the bright half and melts away in the dark half is also recorded in *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abul Fazl Vol. II, p. 360: "Between Great Tibet and the abovementioned Parganah is a cave in which is an image in ice called *Amarnat*. It is considered a shrine of great sanctity. When the new-moon rises from her throne of rays, a bubble as it were of ice is formed in the cave which daily increases little by little for fifteen days till it is somewhat higher than two yards, of the measure of yard determined by His Majesty; with the waning moon, the image likewise begins to decrease, till no trace of it remains when the moon disappears. They believe it to be the image of *Mahadeva* and regard it as a means of fulfilment of their desires. Near the cave is a hill called Amraoti, the clay of which is extremely white. They account it auspicious and smear themselves with it. The snows of this mountainous tract nowhere melt, and from the extreme cold, the straightness of the defiles and the rough inequalities of the road, they are surmounted with great toil.'' The *Nilamatapurana* in Verse 1535 mentions Amarnath and Kalhana in his *Rajatarangini* 1-267 mentions the yatra of Amaresvara which appears to be the same as that of Amarnath.

Inside the cave of Amarnath there is a small cave on the left side of the image from which a chalk-like substance is dug out and given to the pilgrims as Vibhuti of Amarnath by the Mahomedans of the Batkut village. It has been found to contain calcium chloride and calcium sulphate. On the western side of the cave is a small stream called Amarganga or Amaraoti (referred to by Abul Fazl) in which the pilgrims take their bath. In the bed of this stream there are huge quantities of the white substance applied by pilgrims on their bodies. It is said that this smearing protects them from severe cold after they have taken their bath. Pilgrims call it Amar Vibhuti. The legend is that Lord Siva made the gods immortal at this place by feeding them with the nectar He had by pressing the crescent moon which is an ornament on Siva's head. Siva stayed here at the request of gods in the form of a linga of snow and as He made them immortal Siva is known here as Amarnath.

Pilgrims find pigeons here and they are supposed to be Siva and Parvati. Mahomedans of the Batkut village have rights in this place and also a 1/3rd share in the offerings to Amarnath because it is said that they had for a number of years been clearing the difficult passage to Amarnath and making it passable for the annual Sangh and the Chhadi of Lord Siva.

The annual Yatra to Amarnath is just one of the proofs of Kashmir's devotion to Lord Siva. Tradition of Siva-worship in Kashmir is very old. The Kashmir Saivism is called the *Trika Mata* and it had its rise in the eighth century. The literature of this *Trika Mata* is divided into three parts (1) the Agama Sastra, (2) the Spanda Sastra and (3) the Pratyabhijna Sastra. Agamas are of superhuman origin. The majority of them taught the dualistic doctrine. Idealistic monism was revealed in the *Siva Sutras* which are said to have been revealed by Siva Himself in the form of Srikatha to Vasugupta. On these Sutras there is a Vritti, the Vartika of Bhaskara and the Vimarchini of Kshemaraja.

The Spanda Karikas and their Vritti were composed by Kallata, a pupil of Vasugupta, in the second half of the ninth century. Somananda, another pupil of Vasugupta's supplied through his *Sivadrishti* the philosophical reasonings. Utpala, Somananda's pupil, wrote *Isvara Pratyabhijna Karikas* and his grand-pupil, the celebrated Abhinavagupta, wrote a number of works including *Paratrinshika, Tantraloka* and *Tantrasara*. He flourished in the beginning of the eleventh century and became the most dominant figure in all matters pertaining to Kashmir Saivism and the Pratyabhijna Darsana. His pupil Kshemaraja and his grand-pupil Yogaraja kept up the tradition. Madhava in his *Sarvadarsana sangraha* has summarised this Darsana.

In this Darsana, Siva is the Highest Tatwa. There are 36 Tatwas. The Sakti of Siva by which He manifests Himself in this universe is not different from Him.

When this Chit-Sakti has her *Unmesha,* there is an expansion of the universe; when there is her *Nimesha,* there is the absorption of the universe. What Sankara Vedanta explains by the Vivartavada this Pratyabhijna Darsana explains by the Abhasavada. The *Saktipada* on an individual soul is the grace of Lord Siva which gives liberation. This Moksha is nothing but the recognition or Pratyabhijna of the individual soul that he is not different from Siva.

We close this short description of Amarnath and bare reference to Kashmir Saivism with a verse from the *Kusumanjali* of Jagaddhara Bhatta (1350 A.D.) of Kashmir, containing 39 Khandas of 1409 verses in praise of Lord Siva.

ओमिति स्फुरदुरस्यनाहतं गर्भगुम्फितसमस्तवाङ्मयम् ।
दन्ध्वनीति हृदि यत्परं पदं तत्सदक्षरमुपास्महे महः ॥

—*Kusumanjali* 1-6.

"We worship that Highest Light which is eternal and imperishable, which is of the nature of the Pranava Mantra Aum throbbing in the heart of every one and though unuttered by anyone it makes its sound increasingly felt and within the womb of which Mantra Aum are seated all lores and aspects of learning."

28. NADIA OR NAVADVIPA

युगायितं निमेषेण चक्षुषा प्रावृषायितम् ।
शून्यायितं जगत् सर्वं गोविन्दविरहेण मे ॥
—Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's *Sikshashtaka.*

"*In the separation of Govinda, every second is equal to one long* yuga, *the rainy Season has entered my eyes and the whole universe has become vacant for me.*"

Nadia or Navadvipa is a small town in the Nadia District of Bengal. It is situated 23°-24° N. and 88°-33° E. on the west bank of the Bhagirathi or Ganges river. It was the ancient capital of the Nadia District. It is on the delta of Ganga and is called the new island or Navadvipa. Near the modern town of Nadia are the ruins of ancient buildings and structures which were the resort of the ancient Pala Kings of Bengal. The Sena Kings of Bengal transferred their capital from Gaur to Nadia. Maharaja Lakshmana Sena of Gauda was fascinated by this place on account of its being situated on the sacred banks of river Bhagirathi and so constructed his palace there, the ruins of which are still extant. This Lakshmana Sena constructed a tank here called Ballala Dighi in memory of his celebrated father Ballala Sena.

Ballala Sena himself was the author of several works on Dharmashastra—Achara Sagara, Pratishtha Sagara, Dana Sagara and Adbhuta Sagara. The last of the works was left unfinished by him and it was completed by his son, Lakshmana Sena.

The Court of this Lakshmana Sena was adorned by famous men—the celebrated jurist Halayudha, the author of *Brahmana Sarvasva* and other works; Jayadeva of Birbhum, the famous author of *Gita Govinda*; Dhayi, the author of *Pavanaduta*; poet Umapati and others.

The last King Lakshmania was forced by Muslims to go away to Vikramapura and from 1198 A.D. Bengal came into their hands till it came to the British after the Battle of Plassey in 1757 A.D. But during this Mahomedan rule, Nadia became a very great centre of learning and had a University of Sanskrit. After Buddhism had left from Bengal, Nadia developed the biggest University in Bengal and the east, for studies in Logic, Philosophy, Theism and all types of Sanskrit learning of the orthodox kind.

The famous Buddhist University of Vikramasila in Behar founded by Dharma Pala in the 8th century A.D. is said to have been destroyed by Bakhtiar Khilji in about 1203 A.D. The other famous University of Behar was the Brahmanical University of Mithila. By about the 14th century, the University of Nadia grew by such leaps and bounds that it began to attract students from all over India, particularly for Navya Nyaya and it excelled the University of Mithila which in the beginning was the source of inspiration for the scholars of Nadia.

The Mithila school flourished with such eminent logicians as Gangesa, Vardhamana and Pakshadhara. *Tattva-Chintamani* of Gangesa of Mithila of the 12th century A.D. is the first work of the Modern School of Hindu Logic. This *Tattva-Chintamani* became so popular that on this work of 300 pages, Mm. Dr. Vidyabhushan observes that there are over ten lacs of pages of commentaries and sub-commentaries. Vasudeva Sarvabhauma of Nadia (15th century A.D.) went to Mithila and studied logic under Pakshadhara, the leading logician there. On account of his proficiency, Vasudeva was given the title of Sarvabhauma. He committed to memory the whole of *Tattva-Chintamani* and *Kusumanjali* and secretly left for Banaras where he learnt Vedanta. Coming down to Nadia, he started in Nadia the first big academy of logic. Numerous students came to him from various parts of the country. Several of his students became exceedingly distinguished. Raghunatha Siromani became the greatest authority on Navya Nyaya. Shri Chaitanya became the founder of Vaishnavism in Bengal. Raghunandana became the famous jurist.

Raghunatha was born in Nadia of poor parents. Once he was asked by his mother to fetch some fire for domestic purposes. This boy of five went to fetch it without any vessel. A burning charcoal was offered to him in his hands as he had no vessel but this clever boy immediately picked up a handful of sand and received the burning charcoal on that sand. Vasudeva saw this and being impressed by his intelligence took him under his special care. This Raghunatha studied with great industry under Vasudeva at Nadia and then went to Mithila to complete his education under the veteran scholar, Pakshadhara. A legend says that this clever pupil once had a dispute with his teacher, Pakshadhara, in a debate where the teacher greatly insulted the pupil. The young pupil desired to take vengeance on the teacher with an open sword at night. He entered the teacher's house where the teacher with his wife was enjoying the cool moonlight. Before completing the heinous purpose, the pupil wished to hear the conversation of his teacher. The latter, to the great surprise of the pupil, was describing in detail the incident of the debate and giving fulsome compliments and praise to his pupil. Raghunatha was overcome with shame, the sword fell from his hand and he straightaway went to his teacher and fell at his feet, seeking his pardon. The gracious teacher pardoned him and on the next day he announced at the open meeting that his pupil was greater than him in learning. Raghunatha then came to Nadia and developed the academy of logic established by his old teacher Vasudeva. Raghunatha was blind of one eye. In his time Nadia acquired the character of a University. He died at the age of 70 in 1547 A.D. He is the author of the great book *Tattva-Chintamani-Didhiti* which is a commentary on the work of Gangesa. He is also the author of nine other works.

After Raghunatha Siromani, a number of distinguished logicians have occupied the chair of logic in Nadia. They not only wrote learned treatises but were keen on developing proficiency in the Sastrartha or debates.

Apart from Logic, Dharmashastra was also developed in the University of Nadia. Tradition says that the famous jurist Raghunandana was the pupil of Vasudeva and a co-student of Chaitanya. This Raghunandana became the famous writer of Bengal on Dharma-Shastra and even now his authority on law is universally accepted in Bengal as next only to that of Jimutavahana. Raghunandana is known as Smarta Bhattacharya and is the author of the encyclopaedic work *Smriti-tattva* in 28 parts. He is also described as the author of several other works, including a commentary on the *Dayabhaga* of Jimutavahana. His works are full of erudition. He established a chair of Dharma-Shastra at Nadia and after him there flourished numerous scholars who became his successors.

Another distinguished pupil of Vasudeva at Nadia was Krishnananda Agama-Vagisa. He became the great scholar and expounder of the Tantric literature and under him the Tantric school developed extensively in Bengal.

In the days of Chaitanya, Nadia was thus a celebrated centre of learning. There were more than 50 *tols* or Pathasalas where students from distant parts of India used to come to distinguished teachers. Vasudeva Sarvabhauma had his band of pupils—Chaitanya, Raghunatha, Raghunandana, Krishnananda, Murari Gupta; each one of them became distinguished; along with Vasudeva there were scholars like Ramachandra Sarvabhauma, Vidya Vagisa, Mahesvara, Nilambara Chakravarti, Advaitacharya, Gangadasa and others.

Vaishnavism flourished in Bengal and Orissa in the 10th century A.D. The temple of Ananta Vasudeva at Bhuvaneshwara is assigned to the 10th century and the present temple of Jagannath at Puri to the 12th century. Jayadeva, the famous author of *Gita Govinda* flourished in the 12th century. Vaishnavism of Chandidasa (14th century) and Vidyapati (15th century) is coloured by the Vamachara Saktism. Chronologically, Chaitanya followed Nimbarka and Vallabha, and many consider him to be the junior contemporary of Vallabha. When Vallabhacharya was teaching the Pushti Bhakti based on love and as inspired from Bhagavata, Chaitanya was illustrating in Bengal and Orissa this Bhakti based on love with his own experiences and divine ecstasies. As a matter of fact, Chaitanya has not left behind him any work dealing with his own philosophy. He only showed how deep the Bhakti could be by his own illustrious example and by his Kirtanas. The descriptions of his state of ecstasy, and the various extraordinary and supernatural incidents that are said to have taken place during his life moved his contemporaries, and he came to be treated as a divine individual even in his own life-time. Numerous books about him were written in Sanskrit, Bengali, Oriya and Assamese. Murari Gupta wrote his *Karcha* in 1514 A.D. Vrindavanadasa wrote *Chaitanya Bhagavata* shortly after Chaitanya's death. This work is regarded as a great authority on the early life of Chaitanya. Lochanadas wrote *Chaitanya-Mangala* in 1537 A.D. Krishnadasa Kaviraja wrote *Chai-*

tanya Charitamrita in 1582 A.D. This last-mentioned work is most philosophical and interesting and also a very trustworthy biographical document. Krishnadas was born 11 years after the birth of Chaitanya and was the pupil of Raghunathadas who was a direct disciple of Chaitanya. This work was written at the ripe age of 86 at Brindaban after a labour of nine years. This work is looked upon as an authoritative scripture and held in extreme veneration in the Chaitanya Sampradaya.

Chaitanya was born in Nadia or Navadvipa when Bhakti was on its ebb and Vamachara Shakta practices were in great vogue.

Chaitanya's father Jagannatha Misra or Purandara had originally come from Sylhet and had settled down in Nadia, with a desire to reside on the bank of the Bhagirathi. He married Sachidevi, the daughter of Nilambara Chakravarti. She gave birth to eight daughters, one after the other, but none of them survived. She then gave birth to a son who was named Visvarupa. Ten years after the birth of this son, she gave birth to another son on the full-moon day of Falguna of the Saka Year 1407, (18th February 1486 A.D.) when there was an eclipse of the moon and the whole town was singing on the occasion "Hari Bol, Hari Bol". This second son was given the pet name of Nimai and his real name was Visvambhara. After taking Sanyasa, Nimai became famous as Chaitanya.

The parents of Chaitanya were Vaishnavas. Their first son Visvarupa became an ascetic and went out of the house. Nimai was the only son left to the parents. At the age of eight he was given the sacred thread. This handsome boy was the darling of the whole town and was known as Gauranga. Chaitanya was sent to the *tol* or Pathasala of Pandit Gangadasa. When he attained the age of 15, he was considered a leading scholar of logic, grammar and other sastras. When he was nine, he lost his father and he became the sole hope of his widowed mother, Sachidevi, particularly after his elder brother Visvambhara had become an ascetic. His mother, therefore, married him at the age of 16 to Lakshmi, the daughter of Vallabhacharya of Navadvipa. After the marriage Chaitanya started his independent *tol* and acquired reputation as a teacher. When he went on a tour of Bengal, his wife Lakshmi died from a serpent-bite. Chaitanya was later married to Vishnupriya, the daughter of Sanatana Misra. After this marriage, he went on a pilgrimage to Gaya where he met Isvarapuri.

Isvarapuri was of the Madhva Sampradaya and the pupil of Madhavendrapuri. Chaitanya took his Diksha and the Gopala Mantra from this Isvarapuri. This brought about a complete change in Chaitanya. From being a learned Pandit he became an intense and humble devotee of Krishna. He started preaching nothing but Krishna-Bhakti. He studied names of Krishna, imagined himself as Krishna, had Krishna's Kirtanas, and started having periods of ecstasy. Srivatsa, Murari Gupta, Mukund Datta and others used to be with him in his Kirtanas. In Santipura, there was Advaitananda who was a great Vaishnava and very much senior to Chaitanya in age. He preached Bhakti and was awaiting for the Avatara of Krishna to take place. He came in touch with Chaitanya. Similarly, Nityananda, an Avadhuta or ascetic joined Chaitanya in Nadia. In a short time Chaitanya came to be recognised even in his own life time as an Avatara of Lord Krishna. He came to be known as the unison of Radha and Krishna, and as Mahaprabhu Shri Krishna Chaitanya Deva.

राधाभावद्युतिसुवलितं नौमि कृष्णस्वरूपम्।

He and his group spent days and nights in dancing and singing. He and Nityananda converted to Vaishnavism two drunkards, Jagai and Madhai. A Muslim officer prohibited these Kirtans but Chaitanya on the contrary had it near his house; and it is said that he was so impressed that he too joined the Kirtan. A Muslim tailor assumed the name of Haridas and became the disciple of Chaitanya.

Chaitanya took sanyasa in 1510 A.D. at the age of 24 from Kesava Bharati of Madhva Sampradaya. Within six years after that he had a long Yatra of Orissa, South, West and Brindaban. The Adilila or the first part of *Chaitanyacharitamrita* deals with the first 24 years of his life; the Madhyalila with the next 6 years of his life; and the Antyalila with the last 18 years of his life.

At the age of 30, after a Yatra of six years, Chaitanya established himself at Jagannath Puri. Many disciples flocked to him to hear his Upadesa. He used to avoid going too near the garbhagriha as that immediately brought him into a trance and he used to become unconscious. He therefore gazed at the Lord standing at a distance and resting his elbow on a pillar and tears used to flow continuously from his eyes. In his excitement he sometimes jumped into the sea or dashed his head against the temple walls. He gave up his mortal coil at the age of 48 in 1533 A.D.

Nityananda in Bengal and Rupa and Santana in Brindaban spread the Vaishnava cult of Shri Chaitanya. These Gaudiya Goswamis established themselves at Brindaban and built a number of temples and groves. Gopalabhatta, Raghunath Bhatta and Raghunath Das were the other chief disciples of Chaitanya. These six are known as the main Goswamis of this cult. Sanatana, Rupa and their nephew Jiva Goswami wrote numerous works in

Sanskrit. Other Goswamis wrote profusely in Bengali. Baladevi Vidya Bhushana wrote the Govinda Bhashya on the *Brahma Sutras*, expounding Chaintanya's philosophy.

Chaintanya lived for the most part in trances in the later part of his life and apart from his *Sikshashtaka*, no philosophical work of his is available. The doctrines of his cult were mainly developed by his disciples. Chaitanya's Guru and Grand-Guru were of the Madhva Sampradaya. He was also influenced by the Nimbarka Sampradaya and poets like Jayadeva, Bilva Mangala, Chandidasa and Vidyapati. Bhagavata Purana, Brahma Samhita, Narada Pancharatra and Krishna Karnamrita are the works usually relied upon in the Chaitanya cult.

Hussain Sahha was the Nabab of Gaur and in his reign two brahmins were converted to Islam and became known as Sakar Malik and Dabir Khas. They came in touch with Chaitanya and became famous as Sanatana and Rupa. More than 30 Sanskrit works were written by Sanatana and about ten Sanskrit works by Rupa. Their nephew, Jiva, became the chief learned exponent of Chaitanya's Philosophy.

In this cult, the Individual souls and the universe are considered to be real and not born of illusion. Only a rare man after numerous births can have the nectar of Krishna's devotion. Before the bliss of Bhakti, the bliss of Moksha or Brahmananda is of no value. That Bhakti which is practised according to the dictates of scriptures is the lower Bhakti known as Vaidhi. The higher Bhakti is called the Raganuga which seeks Krishna with intensity of love. As a matter of fact, Bhakti with *Sakhibhava* is recommended as it is said that such devotees alone can see the mysteries underlying the sports of Radha and Krishna. The Madhura Bhakti with Sakhibhava is regarded as the best aspect of devotion. Krishna is the eternal Youth with

Sat Chit and Ananda forming his very body. He assumes numerous forms but in Brindavan, Krishna is seen in his purest and the most divine and Purna form. Bhagavata Purana is principally relied upon. The emphasis is on the emotional aspect of devotion.

Chaitanya, Nityananda and Advaitananda are regarded as the Prabhus of this Sampradaya. The gadi of Nityananda is at Nadia, of Advaitananda at Santipur and of Chaitanya at Mathura, Brindaban, Nadia, Ambika, Agradvipa, Sylhet and Khetpur.

We close this description with some verses from the *Sikshashtaka* of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

न धनं न जनं न सुन्दरीं कवितां वा जगदीश कामये।
मम जन्मनि जन्मनीश्वरे भवताद् भक्तिरहैतुकी त्वयि॥

अयि नन्दतनूज किङ्करं पतितं वा विषमे भवाम्बुधौ।
कृपया तव पादपङ्कजस्थितधूलीसदृशं विचिन्तय॥

नयनं गलदश्रुधारया वदनं गद्गदरुद्धया गिरा।
पुलकैर्निचितं वपुः कदा तव नामग्रहणे भविष्यति॥

"O Lord of the Universe! I do not seek wealth or men or beauties or high poetry. Let me have, birth after birth, a causeless and natural Bhakti in You, my Lord.

"O son of Nanda! I—thy servant—am fallen in the stormy ocean of births and rebirths. Be pleased to accept me as a particle of dust on Your lotus-like feet.

"I crave for the day when on merely repeating Your name, my eyes shall continuously overflow with tears, when my mouth shall pronounce only stray and interrupted words being suffocated with emotion and the whole of my body shall be thrilled with joy and horripilation."

29. MALLIKARJUNA

श्रीपर्वते महादेवो देव्या सह महाद्युतिः ।
न्यवसत् परमप्रीतो ब्रह्मा च त्रिदशैः सह ॥
तत्र देवहृदे स्नात्वा शुचिः प्रयतमानसः ।
अश्वमेधमवाप्नोति कुलं चैव समुद्धरेत् ॥

—*Vanaparva*, 83-19 and 20.

"At Sriparvata or the Srisaila Mount, the luminous deity Siva abides with great delight along with His consort Parvati. Brahma also stays there with other gods. One bathing there in the heavenly lake with purity and self-control obtains the reward of performing the Asvamedha sacrifice and he liberates his whole family."

Srisailam is situated in the hilly forest area of the Nandikotkur Taluk of the Kurnool District. It is on the bank of the Krishna river. Srisailam is described as the Kailasa of the South and the river Krishna or one of its branches is known here by the name of Patala Ganga. Srisailam is 73 miles from the Nandyal Railway Station. From Nandyal one has to go to Atmakur, a distance of 38 miles and from there to Nagaluti, a further distance of ten miles. Srisailam is 25 miles fom Nagaluti. This road is just a hilly path through a dense forest. More than eight miles of the road between Nagaluti and Srisailam are paved with huge slabs of rough stones intended as a flight of steps to climb this mount.

On this Srisaila Mount is the famous and ancient temple of Lord Siva known as Mallikarjuna. It is one of the twelve Jyotir Lingas. The forest and hilly area in which it is situated is full of natural scenery. Between Nagaluti and Srisailam there is a forest rest-house at Peddacheruvu.

During the months from February to May there is the Yatra time and numerous pilgrims from various parts of the country gather together at this place. Except for this time the place and the whole track remain deserted. It is inhabited by a tribe of people called Chenchus.

The famous temple of Mallikarjuna Siva is on the top of this hill of Srisailam over-looking the Krishna river which is called Patalaganga here. The distance between the temple and the river is about two miles and the whole area is covered by a flight of steps. Between Nagaluti and Srisailam there are a number of ruined temples and structures. On the various steps, the pilgrims have inscribed different figures and writings. Some inscriptions establish that this area of Srisailam was a part of the kingdom of the great ruler, Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagar, and that it was a very flourishing place at one time. It is said that the place was mostly deserted after its conquest by the Muslims.

A local legend says that there was a princess called Chandravati whose father was the ruler of Chandraguptapuram on the bank of the Krishna. This king returned home after a long journey and fell in love with his own grown-up daughter. When she came to know of his evil intentions, she left her house, cursed her father and came to Srisailam. The ruler was drowned in the Patalaganga. The princess stayed in Srisailam. One of her cows yielded no milk. On inquiry it was found that the cow was voluntarily pouring out her milk on a Siva Linga. The Princess had a dream in which she saw Lord Siva who was manifesting Himself there in the form of that Siva linga. She then constructed there the first temple of Lord Siva over that Linga. She worshipped daily with jasmine or Mallika flowers and therefore this Siva linga became known as

Mallikarjuna. This legend is engraved on a panel on the courtyard wall. The legend of a cow voluntarily pouring her milk over the image of the deity is common to many temples.

Another legend says that Lord Siva came here as a hunter and married a beautiful girl of the Chenchu tribe. This legend is also illustrated in stone in one of the bas-reliefs on the courtyard wall. The Chenchus believe themselves to be the self-appointed guardians of this Mallikarjuna Temple. They drag the car of the Lord on festive occasions. Mallikarjuna, on account of this association with Chenchus, is also called Chenchu Mallayya.

The bas-reliefs are on the outer walls of the courtyard and the temple is situated inside this enclosure which is 500 by 600 feet. There are three gateways on the North, South and East. On the West is the temple of Goddess Bhramarambika. The present architecture belongs to the Vijayanagar period. The Goddess is known here as Madhavi or Bhramaramba or Amman and her temple is a very small structure on the West. She is a form of Durga or Kali and animal sacrifice is offered to her. Bhramarambika's is one of the ancient and famous Saktipeethas; she is considered one of the 18 principal goddesses of India; and the Jyotirbaga of Mallikarjuna is described by the Lingayat Jangama priests as the Linga-Chakravarti. The Siva and Sakti festivals take place separately one after the other. The Siva Festival takes place on the Mahasivratri day. After that the Sakti festival starts. These festivals last from February to May. They were observed with much greater pomp in the past when this was a flourishing area. Compared to the festival of the Goddess, the Siva Festival appears to be a rather tame affair.

The Mallikarjuna Temple facing east is situated in the centre of this enclosure and the Amman Temple is on its western side. A little north of the eastern Mukhadwara of the temple is another Siva temple which is described as the old Mallikarjuna Temple. A little north of this east porch is a small temple with a beautifully carved linga known as the Sahasra Linga. This linga is so carved as to have on it one thousand miniature lingas. This Sahasra Linga is surrounded by a three-headed Naga and is placed on a very beautiful pedestal or Yoni Mandala.

The temple of Mallikarjuna has an excellent old metal image of Siva Nataraja. The walls of the temple were once covered with gilt brass-plates. As many had been removed and were being removed, the remaining ones were taken out and placed in the Madras Museum. In some of these plates, Siva is represented in the form of Dakshinamurti and Chandrasekhara.

Mahabharata in Vana parva describes that Lord Siva and His consort Parvati stay on the Sriparvata or the Srisailam. The *Linga purana* refers to the Jyotirlinga here. This place is one of the eight main *sthanas* of Siva. This is also a great Sakti peetha of Goddess Madhavi or Brahmaramba. Many yogins are said to have practised penance here. This place has therefore a very ancient history and it goes back even to pre-Mahayana age of Buddhism.

The Mahayana School of Buddhism is said to have been founded by Nagarjuna called Arya Nagarjuna in about the first century A.D. The Tibetan tradition says that he flourished about 400 years after the death of Buddha i.e. about 33 B.C. and lived for long 400 years. His biography was translated into Chinese in 401 A.D. by Kumarajiva. His date would therefore be somewhere between 33 B.C. and 300 A.D.

This Nagarjuna was the founder of the Madhyamika

School of Buddhist Philosophy and was a great Buddhist logician. He was born in Berar in the reign of Sadvaha or Satavahana and he passed many years in meditation in a cave on this Srisaila mountain. He is the author of *Madhyamika-Karika Vigraha Vyavartanikarika* and *Pramana Vidhvamsana.* Nagarjuna was considered an authority on numerous subjects including Chemistry, Ayurveda, Mantrasastra and Jyotisha. He was the pupil of Saroha and he converted to Buddhism King Bhojadeva. Nagarjuna was also connected with the establishment of the University of Nalanda. He is considered to be the 16th among the 84 *siddhas* of Buddhism.

It appears that Srisailam was originally a sacred spot of Brahmanical Saivism where Siva and Sakti were worshipped. It became a famous spot for Buddhism after it was associated with Nagarjuna. After the decline of Buddhism in the 7th century A.D. it once again became the sacred Siddha Kshetra of the Brahmanical faith.

Mayuravarman, a Kadamba King of the 6th century, occupied this place right up to the gates of Srisailam. Stones for Siva Linga were collected for worship from this place of the Patala Ganga river. Even now the Vira Saivas or Lingayats who place a Siva Linga in a casket and wear it on their bodies get their linga stones from the bed of Patala Ganga at Srisailam. The stone steps of Srisailam were constructed by the Reddi King, Vema Reddi, in the 14th century. His son Annavema Reddi built a *mandapa* for heroes or Viras where it is said the Konga Viras in their excitement of religious fervour cut off their heads and tongues as offerings to the installed God.

The Vira Saiva or Lingayat priests, called Jangamas, have had five big monasteries on this hill and the principal one was known as the Vira Saiva Siddha Bhiksha Vritti Monastery.

This Mallikarjuna temple is one of the most ancient and sacred Saiva temples in South India. Any one can worship the deity even without a priest. There are no restrictions of caste or creed or sex. This catholicity is said to be due to the influence of Buddhism which was once very powerful here after the time of Nagarjuna. Buddhist pilgrims Fa Hian and Hieun-Tsang have referred to the Srisailam and its association with Nagarjuna.

Though Lingayats are the great worshippers of Mallikarjuna, the management of the temple is in the hands of the Brahmins of Pushpagiri. Till the 14th century A.D. it was being managed by the Jangama Lingayat priests.

The Vira Saivas have five principal seats or *maths* in different parts of India. The Math of Ekorama is at Kedara on the Himalayas. That of Panditaradhya is at Srisailam; that of Revana-Acharya is at Mehli in Mysore; that of Marula at Ujjini in Bellary and that of Visvaradhya in Kasi.

Vira Saivism according to some was founded by Basava, the Brahmin Minister of King Bijjala in 1167 A.D. The Vira Saivites believe that Basava only revived and consolidated the ancient creed which was being propagated in ancient times by the five great Acharyas mentioned above.

The word 'Vira' shows that the followers of this creed had to defend it against great opposition. The Vira Saivas, in defiance of the oppression openly wore the linga of Siva on their bodies and heroically faced the wrath of the rulers who followed the Jaina faith. This Linga was called the Prana-Linga or the very life of the devotee as he never parted with it so long as he was alive.

These Vira Saivas follow the authority of the 28 Agamas. Their five Acharyas whose names are given above are said to belong to very ancient times. This tradition of five Acharyas is also recorded in *Suprabheda Agama*.

Panditaradhya whose *Math* is on the Srisailam is the fourth of these five great Acharyas and he is identified by Prof. Pandey with Sripati Pandita, the author of the Srikara Bhashya on the *Brahma Sutras* of Badarayana, written from the point of view of the Vira Saiva doctrines.

Vira Saivas are distinguished from other sects of Hinduism on account of the importance it has given to the *Mathas* and its want of emphasis on the distinctions of castes. Their past opposition to the Jains is well known and it is perhaps from Jains that they borrowed these two characteristics. The Vira Saivas believe in the *Visesha-Advaita.* Sripati criticises both Sankara's *Kevala Advaita* and Ramanuja's *Visishta Advaita.* The Vira Saivas believe like the Kashmir Saivites in the 36 *tattvas.* They believe in the three impurities—Aanava, Kaarma and Maayiya; and the ways of liberation are stated to be six—Shadadhva. Siva is called Sthala. He is the highest *tattva* and being the resort of all, He is called Sthala. When on account of the agitation of His sakti, He is divided into two aspects, these two are known as Linga Sthala and Anga Sthala. Linga is the God Siva; Anga is the Jiva devotee. Sakti has also two aspects. The aspect with Siva is Kala, that with Jiva is Bhakti. With Bhakti, Jiva can realise the Samarasya of Jiva and Siva and this is called Mukti.

Much of the literature of Vira Saivism is available in the Kannada language. Writings of Basava and his successors form the main religious literature of Vira Saivas.

The Lingi Brahmins are either Acharyas or Panchamas. Most of the Acharyas are called Jangamas. Some of them are ascetics while others are householders. The Jangama Acharyas are associated with one of the five main *maths.* The Diksha in this creed is of the Siva Panchakshari Mantra. Thereafter they have to wear the Siva Linga on their bodies. The Linga is identified with the Atma and the highest tattva. Even ladies have this Diksha. They have to daily worship this Siva Linga worn on the body.

Vira Saivas have the Bheda-Abheda-Vada. The theory of Sankara regarding Adhyasa and Maya is criticised. They describe the qualified monism of Ramanuja as self-contradictory. Brahman is the Para Siva or Pati and is beyond the 36 Tattvas. Pasu or Jiva is tied down to the three impurities of Mala, Karma and Maya. Liberation means freedom from these impurities or bondages. The six paths are Varna, Pada, Mantra, Kala, Bhuvana and Tattva. They also believe in the six kinds of graces or Saktipata.

Srisailam is the principal seat of Saivism and has one of the five principal Maths of the Vira Saivas. It is also a well-known Sakti Peetha of Brahmarambika.

Brahmamba-Ashtaka is attributed to Sankaracharya. This is the last verse. The repetitions of the letter *ga* may be noted.

गायत्रीं गरुडध्वजां गगनगां गान्धर्वगानप्रियां
गम्भीरां गजगामिनीं गिरिसुतां गन्धाक्षतालङ्कृताम् ।
गङ्गागौतमगर्गसंनुतपदां मां गौतमीं गोमतीं
श्रीशैलस्थलवासिनीं भगवतीं श्रीमातरं भावये ॥

"I contemplate on the auspicious and divine mother residing on the Srisaila. She is Gayatri; has banner of the eagle; moves in the sky; loves music; is deep; moves with the gait of an elephant; is the daughter of Himalaya; is adorned with sandal paste and rice, is worshipped by Ganga, Gautama and Garga; and is called the speech, the Gautami and Gomati."

30. HARDWAR

एतस्याः सलिलं मूर्ध्नि वृषाङ्कः पर्यधारयत् ।
गङ्गाद्वारे महाभाग येन लोकस्थितिर्भवेत् ॥
एतां भगवतीं देवीं भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ।
प्रयतेनात्मना तात ! प्रतिगम्याभ्यवादत ॥

—*Vanaparva* 144, 9 and 10.

Sage Lomasa tells king Yudhishthira:—

"*Lord Siva placed the falling Ganges on His Head at Gangadwara so that the people could be protected. This is the sacred divine river Ganga. All of you approach her with a pure mind and salute her.*"

This ancient and celebrated town of Hardwar, also known as Gangadwara and Mayapuri, is situated on the right bank of River Ganges at the foot of the Siwaliks. Its position is 29° 58′ N. and 78° 10′ E.

Mahomedan historians use the word Gangadwara. Hardwar is called Haridwara by Vaishnavas and Haradwara by Saivites. Tom Coyrat who visited the place in the reign of Jahangir called it "Haridwara, the Capital of Siva". The seven sacred cities include Hardwar, but there it is called Maya or Mayapuri—the seven cities being Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya, Kasi, Kanchi, Avanti and Dwaramati. The Chinese pilgrim Hieun-Tsang describes it as Moyulo or Mayura, situated on the North-West frontier of Madawar and on the eastern bank of the Ganges. At a short distance from the town there was a great temple called the "Gate of the Ganges" or Gangadwara. The Ganges here is divided into many shallow channels.

The River Ganges moves for about 200 miles in the mountains and gushes out at this place into the open plains. The famous legend of Bhagiratha is associated with Ganga. On account of the curse of Sage Kapila, the ancestors of Bhagiratha were burnt here. For their salvation, he brought down Ganga; in order to lessen the force of the falling river, Lord Siva held her in his matted hair. Thereafter she was led by Bhagiratha to liberate his ancestors. The river told Bhagiratha:

दर्शयस्व महाराज ! मार्गं केन व्रजाम्यहम् ।

—*Vanaparva* 109-15.

"Please show me the way by which I shall now flow."

It was Bhagiratha who laid down the way for the river perhaps with his engineering power and brought river Ganga to the place where she now flows.

Bhishma's father, Santanu, was married to Ganga. *Adiparva* Ch. 103 records the legend that Santanu's father Pratipa was once performing a penance at Gangadwara or Hardwar. Ganga appeared before him as a beautiful lady, sat on his right thigh and requested him to consort with her. Pratipa said that he would like to be faithful to his wife, so he treated her like a daughter and said that if she was so inclined she might marry his son Santanu. Pratipa gave this interesting reply:—

प्राप्य दक्षिणमूरुं मे त्वमाश्लिष्टा वराङ्गना ॥
अपत्यानां स्नुषाणां च भीरु विद्ध्येतदासनम् ।
सव्योरुः कामिनीभोग्यस्त्वया स च विवर्जितः ।
तस्मादहं नाचरिष्ये त्वयि कामं वराङ्गने ॥
स्नुषा मे भव सुश्रोणि ! पुत्रार्थं त्वां वृणोम्यहम् ।

—*Adiparva* 103, 10-12.

"Lovely Lady! you have come and sat on my right thigh. Now please note that one's right thigh is a proper seat for one's own children and daughter-in-law. It is the left thigh of a man where his consort sits and you have

avoided that. Good lady! I do not look at you with the eye of a lover. I invite you to become my daughter-in-law."

Drona's father Bharadwaja saw damsel Ghritachi at Gangadwara and through her he had a son who became the famous Drona Acharya of the Mahabharata age.

Arjuna was on a pilgrimage in a big company. He came to Gangadwara and stayed there for a few days. Once while taking a bath in the river he was dragged away by Ulupi, the daughter of a Naga King, Kauravya by name. She requested Arjuna to marry her. Arjuna pleaded that as a vow of celebacy was forced on him for an year, she would have to wait. She explained that the vow was limited only with reference to Draupadi—as Arjuna had violated the agreed rule and entered Draupadi's apartment when she was with one of Arjuna's brothers. Arjuna very conveniently accepted the argument and through her he had a son named Iravat. After some time he again emerged at Gangadwar from her residence.

Hardwar, Kankhal and Jwalapur, all these three towns are situated near each other and they form one single municipal area.

Hardwar is known as the place where lived the famous Sage Kapila, who burnt the sons of Sagara. The latter had been in search of their sacrificial horse which was stolen by Indra and tied up by him near the hermitage of Sage Kapila. Taking this sage to be the thief, the sons of Sagara prepared to attack him. Kapila came to know of their resolve and burnt them. Subsequently Bhagiratha brought down the Ganga and liberated them. The abode of Sage Kapila is still pointed out at a place called Kapilasthana.

Ganga at Hardwar has the width of a mile and on the river bank there is a succession of ghats and temples. The waters are very clean and pure. One can see the bottom very clearly. From Hardwar starts the route for going up to the Himalaya region, particularly to Kedar and Badari. The pilgrimages start in summer and every year in the month of Vaisakha pilgrims gather together at Hardwar. Vaisakha Sukla 1st (of the North Indian calendar) is the time when the Sun is usually in Aries. Every twelve years when Jupiter is in Aquarius, there is the big Kumbha Mela. Lacs of people attend it. It is stated that:

गङ्गाद्वारे कुशावर्ते बिल्वके नीलपर्वते ।
तीर्थे कनखले स्नात्वा धूतपापो दिवं व्रजेत् ।।

—*Viramitrodaya, Tirthaprakasa* p. 377.

"One bathing at these five places becomes purified and goes to heaven—Gangadwara, Kusavarta, Bilva Tirtha, Nila Parvata and Kanakhal".

All these five places are also pointed out near Nasik where Godavari is taken to be the Ganga of the South.

All the five places are situated in the vicinity of each other. Gangadwara is so called because the Ganga starts flowing on the plains at this place—Hardwar. Kankhal is situated two miles away from this. Nila Devi temple is on the Nila Parvata on the opposite bank of the Ganga. At Kusavarta people perform the sraddhas. In the Bilva Thirtha there is the temple of Bilvesvar Mahadeva.

Hardwar has been, since time immemorial, a sacred abode of sadhus and saints. The place is famous for a bath in Ganga, darsana at temples and sraddha to be performed at Kusavarta. The main ghat at Hardwar is called Har-ki-Pairi—so called because it is said to have the imprint of Lord Vishnu's feet shown on a stone in wall. This most sacred ghat at Hardwar was at one time very small—only 34 feet wide at the top and with 90 steps. During

Kumbha Mela days, on eclipse days and other auspicious occasions, there is a great rush of pilgrims. They vie with one other in having the bath at the appointed propitious moment. A number of people used to get crushed to death and even the guards found it impossible to check the onrush of the crowds. The Government is now taking necessary precautions and the width of the ghat and the number of steps have been increased and improved. Sanitary reforms have also been introduced to avoid cholera and other epidemics. The bathing place has been also improved. The bottom of the pool has been paved and an iron railing put on the outer edge to protect the bathers.

Near the Har-ki-Pairi is the Gangadwara temple, the biggest and the most important temple here which is visited by lacs of people during the Mela days.

The Bhimgoda tank also has its legend. Bhimasena, the second Pandava, was asked to stay here to guide the river Ganga in her descent. A kick from the horse of Bhima created a hollow in the rock and this is now known as the Bhimaghora or Bhimgoda tank.

Near the river and in the town is the Brahma Kunda.

South of Gangadwara are a number of temples and monasteries. At a little distance from Har-ki-Pairi, is the Saiva temple of Sravannath. About a mile from Hardwar is the town of Mayapur. There are three old temples there —one of Mayadevi, the other of Bhairava and the third of Narayana. Among the seven sacred cities it is Mayapuri that is mentioned. Perhaps this may be the old site of Hardwar. Cunningham says that it is a very ancient site identical with that of the populous city three and a half miles in circuit described by Hieun T-sang. Beyond the old Narayan Bali Temple is a large mound 750 feet square which is a relic of the fort of the mythical King Vena.

About a mile South of Mayapur is the town of Kankhal. The meaning of this name is stated to be "who is that Khala or Villain who does not obtain liberation at this spot?" i.e. every one is liberated here. It is populated mainly by brahmins and sanyasins. It is bigger than Hardwar and its appearance is more clean and picturesque. The well-to-do section of Hardwar lives here.

Legend says that Daksha Prajapati performed a *yajna* here. The place is still pointed out as the Daksha-sthana. There is also a temple of Daksha here. In this *yajna* which was performed by her father Daksha, Sati, the consort of Siva, came of her own accord, though she was not invited. As Daksha did not properly respect her husband Siva, and as she herself was treated coldly, Sati burnt herself. Siva came to know of this and destroyed this *yajna* through Virabhadra. The latter cut off the head of Daksha; gods then propitiated Siva who ultimately revived Daksha.

Another legend states the reason why Sati burnt herself. Siva once bowed to Rama in the presence of Sati. She asked for the reason. She was told that Rama was not a mortal but an incarnation of Vishnu whom Siva himself saluted. Sati wished to test Rama. She disguised herself as Sita and met Rama who immediately recognised her and bowed to her. Sati returned home. Siva came to know of the incident and as she had disguised herself as Sita whom Siva held in veneration, Sati found that Siva was growing colder to her. In the meantime she went to her father's place where she was also insulted. She, therefore, burnt herself. She was reborn as the daughter of Himalaya. All these legends are connected with Kankhal. Kankhal has a large number of temples. Daksha temple is the chief one. It is called Dakshesvara. This is the place where Daksha's *yajna* was spoiled. There are a number of small deserted temples round about. Pilgrim houses have also been constructed in the vicinity.

It was at Kankhal that Sanatkumar became a *siddha.* The place where Sati was burnt is known as the Sati Kund.

About four miles from Hardwar is Jwalapur. The priests of Hardwar mostly stay there.

Hardwar and Kankhal mark the bottom of the Himalayas. Ganga flows with great force here. The natural sights, nearness of the mountain region and the cool and resounding flow of India's mighty river Ganga create an atmosphere conducive to mental peace and spiritual sublimation.

About 24 miles from Hardwar is Hrisikesa, on the line from Hardwar to Dehra Dun, which leads to Gangotri, Kedar and Badari. Hrisikesa is famous for the Bharatji's temple said to have been established by Sri Sankaracharya. There are numerous pilgrim houses and the place is full of sadhus and sanyasins. There are the quarters of the celebrated Kali Kamliwala. The men in charge here take care of the extra luggage, act as bankers and try to be as helpful to the pilgrims as possible. Those who want to proceed from here for the Himalaya Yatra have to engage here their Jhampan, Kandis, etc. The forest University of Swami Sivanandaji and his Divine Life Society are quite famous for the excellent work they are doing.

Kubjamraka is sometimes identified with Hardwar while *Varaha* (140:60) to 64 identifies it with Hrisikesa. At Kubjamraka, Vishnu gave darshan to Sage Raibhya. The sages saw Vishnu as Kubja or in a hunch-backed shape on the mango tree; therefore the place is called Kubjamraka.

यत्राम्रे कुब्जरूपेण दृष्टो मुनिभिरच्युतः ।
ततः कुब्जाभ्रकं तीर्थं सर्वपापप्रणाशनम् ॥ —*Skanda.*

It became famous as a Vishnu Tirtha.

At Hardwar Siva stays with Parvati. Those worshipping Siva here are purified. Great merit accrues to any one who takes a bath at Gangadwara (*Tirthaprakasa* p. 377).

The limits of Maya-kshetra are given as from Gangadwara to Ratna-stambha and from Nandagiri to Kashthagiri (*Skanda*).

In the Kumbha Mela that takes place at Hardwar, Prayaga, Ujjai and Nasik, people assemble at Hardwar in Aquarius Jupiter when the sun is in Aries. Lacs of people come from all parts of India for bath, darshan in temples, sraddha and for meeting the sadhus, saints and sanyasins.

In the reign of King Harsha in the 7th century A.D. such religious festivals were celebrated with great pomp at Prayaga when the Chinese pilgrim Hieun-Tsang was present. Heads of various religious sects had collected there and there were discourses on philosophical and religious subjects. The Emperor distributed lavishly large dakshinas on such occasions.

Sri Sankaracharya is said to have regularised this institution of periodic Melas of a religious and philosophical nature and brought order to the ranks of the sadhus. He classified them in ten orders called the Dasa Nami Sannyasins—Saraswati, Puri, Vana, Tirtha, Giri, Parvata, Bharati, Aranya, Asrama and Sagara. The scheme proved highly successful. The religious heads would travel periodically to these 4 places of Kumbha, get in touch with the lay followers and be their moral guides. They were selfless seekers after truth imbued with high spiritualism. They exercised great influence on the masses of people. There may be faked sadhus who delude others, but that does not negative the existence and the excellence of the genuine saintly sadhus. The Kumbha gives opportunities for holding a religious parliament:

गङ्गाद्वारसमं तीर्थं न कैलाससमो गिरिः।
वासुदेवसमो देवो न गङ्गासदृशं परम् ॥
अस्मिन् क्षेत्रेऽर्धमासे तु शिवसन्यस्तमानसः।
प्राप्नोति शिवसायुज्यं किमन्यैर्बहुभाषितैः ॥

—*Skanda.*

"There is no Tirtha equal to Gangadwara; no mountain equal to Kailasa; no God equal to Vasudeva; no river equal to Ganga. He who contemplates on Siva at this place even for a fortnight becomes one with Siva. Why more be said?"

31. SUCHINDRAM

नमोऽस्तु वागीशहरीश्वराय
नगेन्द्रचापाय नदीधराय ।
नाम्ना शुचीन्द्रेश इति स्तुताय
ज्ञानाटवीशाय नमः शिवाय ॥

—Sankaracharya.

"Salutation to Siva, the Lord of Jnana forest, worshipped as Suchindra-Isa, of the form of the Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, wielding the bow of the Meru mountain and holding Ganga on the head."

Suchindram, 77° 30′ East and 8° 9′ North, is situated eight miles north-west of Cape Comorin or Kanya Kumari in the Agastiswaram Taluk, Trivandrum District, Travancore. It is on the bank of river Palayar. It is part of the area known as Nanchinad. Legend says that the area from Gokarnam in the north to Cape Comorin in the south emerged out of the ocean at the command of Sage Parasurama, the warrior-hero and son of Sage Jamadagni.

Gokarnam or Goa was submerged in the sea. Parasurama with the consent of the sea-god threw his axe into the waters. It was agreed that the area covered by the throwing of the axe should be regarded as reclaimed. The axe fell at Cape Comorin and the sea receded from all that area, from Goa to the Cape.

Just as Sage Agastya is closely associated with Tamil Nad, Sage Parasurama is associated with Kerala. The myth may represent the entry of Aryans into Kerala and the receding of the sea-waters further west.

In Suchindram is situated the majestic temple of the Trimurti—Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. It is called

Sthanumalayapperumal temple, where Sthanu, Mal and Aya represent the three deities of the Trimurti Siva, Vishnu and Brahma. The temple has great architectural beauty and is visited by numerous pilgrims throughout the year. It is situated very near the Land's End of India, Cape Comorin, and legend connects the Kumari Goddess at Kanya Kumari with Lord Siva abiding at Suchindram. While standing on this rocky Land's End of India in the South, one sees the rise and setting of the Sun in the same ocean. The goddess here is still a virgin. Legend says that a marriage between her and Lord Siva was arranged at Cape Comorin. Gods are supposed to travel only at nights. Siva did not arrive at the scheduled time. The bride goddess Kumari was obliged to go out in search of her bride-groom. By the time She had reached Kazhukkanpara, there was daylight and the disheartened bride returned to Cape Comorin. Siva on his part had come down as far as Suchindram, when it was daybreak, and he was obliged to stay there. Since then the still unmarried goddess Kumari stays at the Cape Comorin and Siva at Suchindram. She is still a disappointed goddess who failed to secure her coveted husband. Large quantities of food prepared on the marriage-occasion are said to have turned into coloured sands and pebbles.

Sage Atri and his wife Anasuya were residing in the Jnanaranya near Suchindram. Once when Atri had gone to Brahma Loka, the three gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, desired to test the chastity of Anasuya. They became her guests and refused to receive any food till she served them in her nude form.

न ददासि यदि प्राज्ञे विवस्त्राऽन्नं पतिव्रते।
एतत्करोदकं मुक्त्वा प्राणांस्त्यक्ष्यामहे वयम्॥

She sprinkled water over her guests, which transformed them into small babies. Goddesses Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati came to her with a request to restore their husbands to their original forms. Atri returned in the meantime. The gods who were then restored to their old forms expressed great satisfaction and appreciation and at the special request of the Sage and his wife they were born as their children in the form of Chandra, Dattatreya and Durvasas. They also assumed the form of a Mahalinga which represents the Trimurti. The bottom of the Mahalinga represents Brahma, the middle part Vishnu and the top Siva. The Adi Sankaracharya is said to have come here and visualised the dance of Siva in the Chitra Sabha, and Siva Himself is said to have given to him the upadesa of the Pranava Mantra.

Regarding the name of the temple as Suchindram, legend says that Indra was cursed by Sage Gautama for misbehaving with Ahalya. Indra was advised to perform penance in this Jnana-Kanana. He left his chariot at Rathapura or Terur, about a mile from Suchindram, and worshipped the Trimurti Mahalinga at Suchindram. By way of Prayaschitta, Indra was asked to pass through boiling ghee which he did. As Indra secured his purification and redemption from his sins at this temple, it was named the Suchindram temple. Ahalya also was purified here. This place is, therefore, known as the *sodhana-kshetra.*

Dr. K. K. Pillai states that the earliest Lithic records of Suchindram belong to the 9th century A.D., proving that the shrine was in existence in the time of Maran Cadayan, the early Pandyan sovereign (880-900 A.D.).

The Suchindram temple is located in a compound—the length of whose northern wall is 402 feet, and of its western wall 233 feet. In this compound there are more than 30 shrines. The elegant and graceful gopuram in the east is 134 feet high. It contains the sculptural representations of numerous deities of the Hindu Pantheon.

The main temple is that of Sthanunathaswamy, also called Vadakkedam or Sthanumalayapperumal. It is located on the western side of the compound. Tradition says that water, oil, milk, flowers, etc., offered to the deity here go through an underground passage to Kanya Kumari at a place called the Sthanu tirtha. The garbagriha of this Vedakkedam shrine contains the Sivalinga 2½ feet high. It is usually decked with a golden or silver mask.

Facing the sanctum of this main temple and on the eastern side of Cempakaraman Mandapa is the famous shrine of Konrayadinatha. It is a *swayambhu linga* representing the Trimurti. Behind this shrine is the sacred Konrai tree. According to the wishes of Atri and Anasuya Siva, Brahma and Vishnu appeared in the form of this linga representing respectively its top, middle and bottom portions.

The Natakasala to the east has a big pavilion now used for religious lectures and other functions. There are Sribalipuras in four directions. The northern Sribalipura, about 263 feet long, is the best. In the western Sribalipura, discourses on Mahabharata take place. In the north-east portion of the compound is the Chitra Sabha with two rows of pillars. On each of these massive pillars there are sculptures of puranic personalities. In the Chitra Sabha, the Urdhva-tandava of Siva is portrayed. The Cempakaraman Mandapa in the centre is the biggest pavilion in the temple. Artistic pillars there have numerous puranic scenes represented on them. The mythological figures are both Saivite and Vaishnavite.

It is believed that the Sthanunathaswamy shrine is later than the Swayambhu-linga of the Konrayadinatha.

The Kailasattu Mahadeva shrine in the south-western part of the compound is the next ancient shrine here. The deity is the Mahadeva of the Southern Kailasa. The shrine faces west.

The Vadakkedam and the Tekkedam are the Siva and Vishnu shrines and were in existence before the 10th century A.D..

The Suchindram village was a Brahmadeya village, perhaps endowed by one of the Pandya kings in the 9th century A.D.. The affairs of such villages were managed by an assembly or Mahasabhai. From the 14th to the 19th century, the powers were wielded by Yogakkars. After 1811 A.D. the temple was managed by the State. In 1950, a Devaswam Board was constituted and the supreme control of the temple is now vested in this Board.

There are three main *utsavas* in this temple. They are the Margali Utsav in December-January, the Chitrai Utsav in April-May and the Avani Utsav in September-October.

Injunctions of Agamas were meticulously carried out in this temple. Distinctions of caste and rules of untouchability were rigidly observed. There was a satyagraha movement and ultimately in 1936 there was a State proclamation that all Hindus irrespective of caste distinctions were allowed entry into all the temples in the State.

Suchindram is famous for the ordeal of what is known as Suchindram Pratyayam. The suspect was made to dip his hand in boiling ghee and if he came out unhurt, his innocence was taken as established. The legend of Indra himself having undergone a similar penance by entering a cauldron of boiling ghee at Suchindram is well known.

Dr. K. K. Pillai details the procedure of this ordeal in his learned treatise. The accused desirous of proving his innocence sent a request to the headman to grant him a letter of authorization for undergoing the ordeal at Suchindram. After the order of the Ruler was obtained, the Yogakkar fixed a time and the members assembled at the Udaya Martanda Mandapa. The accused and his personal servants were required to fast for the whole day. After a prolonged ceremony ghee was boiled to a high pitch. When the leaf and the bark thrown into the ghee made a cracking sound, it was known that the ghee was boiled to the required point. The accused was then made to dip his hand inside the ghee and take out a seal. If on the third day the hand was free from any blister or wound, the accused was to be acquitted. If there were blisters, his guilt was proved and the accused became a social outcaste.

The architecture of the Suchindram temple shows that its structures owe their origin to different periods. Beginning from the clearly Pandyas and Cholas up to the Vijayanagar kings, Nayaks and Travancore Rulers, all have added their share in the embellishment of this temple. The sculpture in this temple is variegated and contains some of the most graceful and artistic pieces. Gods, goddesses, animals, birds, natural scenes, flowers, human figures, etc., all find their place. Mural paintings are mostly confined to the inner walls of the gopura. The Suchindra temple contains numerous inscriptions. In the Sthanunathaswamy shrine itself there are more than 70 inscriptions. They represent a wide range of Royal dynasties and are very useful in determining the chronology of events.

"From Himalaya to Kanya Kumari"—this is the phrase used to point out the one single culture of the entire Bharata, the unity of the country and its vastness.

Ptolemy mentions Kumari as Koumaria. The Periplus refers to Kumari as harbour komari. Kanyakumari is mentioned as Kanya Tirtha in Sabhaparva 32-75 and Vanaparva 81-112 and 83-23. Dattatreya is mentioned as the son of Atri and Anasuya in Sabhaparva 48-1 and Anusasana 257-5. *Bhagavata* 4-1 gives the legend of the birth of Dattatreya and states:

सोमोऽभूद् ब्रह्मणोंऽशेन दत्तो विष्णोस्तु योगवित् ।
दुर्वासाः शंकरस्यांशो निबोधाङ्गिरसः प्रजाः ।।

—Bhagavata 4-1-33.

"Of Atri and Anasuya, Soma was born as a part of Brahma; Datta, the knower of Yoga, as a part of Vishnu and Sage Durvasas as a part of Siva."

32. BRINDABAN

वर्हापीडं नटवरवपुः कर्णयोः कर्णिकारं
बिभ्रद् वासः कनककपिशं वैजयन्तीं च मालाम् ।
रन्ध्रान् वेणोरधरसुधया पूरयन् गोपवृन्दै-
र्वृन्दारण्यं स्वपदरमणं प्राविशद् गीतकीर्तिः ॥

—*Bhagavata* 10-21-5.

"Having assumed the form of the Chief Actor, put on the peacock's tail, placed the ornament of Karnikara flowers in the ears, put on the cloth of the golden colour and the garland vaijayanti, filling the cavities of his lute with the nectar on his lips—the celebrated Krishna, along with Gopas entered the forest of holy Basil trees (Brindaban) which had become charming on account of his presence."

About six miles from Mathura is situated the present town of Brindaban which has been considered to be one of the holiest places of Hindus since the days of Krishna. *Bhagavata,* 10-11, gives the reason why Nanda and other Gopas shifted from Gokul to Brindaban: "At Gokul there have befallen many calamities afflicting children; we must therefore shift" (*Bh.* 10-11-23).

Brindaban was a place full of cattle and a newly forested area; it had grass, creepers, the holy mount Govardhana, and the sacred bank of river Yamuna. The Gopas shifted there in their bullock-carts, arranged them in the shape of the half-moon and so resided at Brindaban.

At Brindaban there is a curve or the "dragging" of the river Yamuna attributed to Krishna's elder brother Balarama. One version is that while trying to imitate

Krishna, he performed his dances with Gopis rather crudely and clumsily. So Yamuna taunted him. In a rage, he drew the river with a deep furrow of his plough. The other version is that Balarama, fond of sweet liquor, found it on a Kadamba tree. He got intoxicated, desired to take a bath, ordered the river to come near him, and on her failure to come, he dragged her with a furrow of his ploughshare.

Krishna's sports with Radha at Brindaban have been the subject of a vast literature. Poet Jayadeva starts his *Gita Govinda* by saying:

राधामाधवयोर्जयन्ति यमूनाकूले रहः केलयः ।

"Victorious are the love sports of Radha and Krishna on the bank of Yamuna."

Radha, according to *Padmapurana,* was found by Vrishabhanu while he was clearing the ground for sacrificial purposes. According to *Brahma Vaivarta,* Radha who was residing in Goloka, cursed Sridama to become a demon by name Sankhachuda. She was in turn cursed by him to become a human being. She became the daughter of Vrishabhanu and his wife Kalavati.

She is said to have been born on Sunday, Bhadrapada Shukla 8th. According to certain Puranas, she was not a mistress but the wife of Krishna and *Adi Purana* says that she was married to Krishna on the 3rd of the bright half of Vaishakha in the Rohini Nakshatra. She was Krishna's beloved. She is called Vrindavani, Vrinda and Vrindavana-Vinodini. She is considered one of the Saktis of Vishnu and the deity of prosperity. Vishnu is believed to have assumed the form of Krishna and Lakshmi of Radha. The word, Radha, is derived from the root *raa,* to give (liberation) and *dhaa,* to run towards Krishna's abode.

This sacred site of the Basil forest or Brindaban has its ancient temples dating from the 16th century A.D.. Buddhism did not flourish at this place. Some of the largest temples in North India were built at Brindaban during the last 500 years. The Chief ancient temples are those of Govinda Devaji, Radha Vallabha, Gopinath, Jugalkishore, and Madan Mohan. The Chira-harana Ghat is the place where Krishna is said to have stolen the clothes of the Gopis while they were bathing. The incident is narrated in *Bhagavata*, 10-22.

Now there are more than a thousand temples and 32 ghats in the town which has its municipality. People start on a pilgrimage of the Vraja and by crossing Yamuna in a boat near Kesighat, they reach Brindaban. Apart from the five ancient temples stated above, there are temples of Rangaji, and those built by Lal Babu, the Maharaja of Gwalior, and Shah Biharilal, also the temples of Radha Gopal, Indra Kisor, etc. There is also the shrine of the Gopisvara Mahadeva.

Govinda Devaji's red-stone temple is highly impressive and Fergusson says that it is one of those interesting and elegant temples in India from which a European architect might borrow a few hints. Growse describes it as solemn or imposing, instead of calling it elegant, and adds that the suggestions to be derived from it are "many" rather than "few". It was built in 1590 A.D. under the directions of the two Gurus Rupa and Sanatana. Originally there was the image of Govinda Devaji, but in anticipation of Aurangzeb's visit the image was removed to Jaipur.

Seth Govinddas and Radhakrishna built the temple of Sri Rangaji of the Ramanuja Sampradaya at a cost of 4½ lacs. It is both spacious and artistic and is constructed in the South Indian Style with Gopuras and the goldplated *stambha* in front of the deity. There are festivals in the months of Chaitra and Pausha.

Brindaban contains various spots like the Kunja gali, the Mana gali, the Dana gali, etc., which are supposed to have associations with Krishna's life. Krishna subdued the famous Kaliya Snake at this place. The incident is narrated in *Bhagavata,* 10-16, and Narasimha Mehta's famous song

जलकमल छांडी जाने बाला स्वामी हमारो जागशे
जागशे तने मारशे मने बालहत्या लागशे ॥

Krishna had his celebrated Maha Rasa with Gopis at this spot. (*Bhagavata* 10-29 and 33). Regarding this Rasa, Krishna himself says:

न मय्यावेशितधियां कामः कामाय कल्पते ।
भर्जिता क्वथिता धाना प्रायो बीजाय नष्यते ॥

—*Bhagavata* 10-32-26

"In case of those who have their minds concentrated on me, their Kama towards me is no Kama or Eros at all. Fried or cooked grain can never become a seed."

In reply to a relevant question of King Parikshit, Sage Suka concludes by saying:

विक्रीडितं व्रजवधूभिरिदं च विष्णोः
श्रद्धान्वितोऽनुशृणुयादथ वर्णयेद् यः ।
भक्तिं परां भगवति प्रतिलभ्य कामं
हृद्रोगमाश्वपहिनोत्यचिरेण धीरः ॥

—*Bhagavata* 10-42-40.

"He who hears or describes with faith this sport of the milk-maids of Vraja with Vishnu establishes his firm devotion in the Lord, and this steadfast devotee is imme-

diately enabled to drive out the dirty disease of the heart —namely, sex-passion.''

And the conception of Krishna in the minds of those Gopis is also clearly described in *Bhagavata* 10-31-4.

न खलु गोपिकानन्दनो भवान्
अखिलदेहिनां अन्तरात्मदृक् ।
विखनसार्थितो विश्वगुप्तये
सरव उदेयिवान् सात्वतां कुले ॥

''You are not only the loved companion of the Gopikas, but also the inner soul and seer of all creatures. Our friend! You were begged of by Brahma to incarnate yourself for the protection of the world and therefore you have been born in the family of Satwats.''

Krishna's famous lute was played at this spot. It maddened the peacocks. Even the deer with their young ones appreciated and worshipped it with their glances of love. Cows drank it with outstretched ears and touched Govinda with tearful eyes. Birds heard it with unwinking eyes. Krishna sang the Samaveda in his flute.

Brindaban is described by Kalidasa in *Raghuvamsa,* 6-50, as equal to the garden of Kubera.

संभाव्य भर्तारममुं युवानं मृदुप्रवालोत्तरपुष्पशय्ये ।
वृन्दावने चैत्ररथादनूने निर्विश्यतां सुन्दरि ! यौवनश्रीः ॥

Indumati, seeing various princes, one by one, for her *swayamvara* is shown Sushena, the Ruler of the Surasenas. She is told that if she selected him she would be able to enjoy her youth in Brindaban which was equal to Chaitraratha, the garden of Kubera.

Brindaban is famous for its peacocks and monkeys. There are special endowments for both of them. There are several *chhatras* also for the distribution of food. The Muslims tried to rename the town of Brindaban as

Muminabad but did not succeed; the old name remains and the Muslims have kept out of it.

Nabhaji's *Bhaktamala* written in the reign of Akbar is respected by all sects of Brindaban and it propounds the catholic view that

भक्त-भक्ति-भगवान्-गुरु चतुर नाम वपु एक ।

The devotee, devotion, the deity and the teacher are all one. There is one God in all creatures and everyone is entitled to the path of devotion.

Brindaban became the centre for the religious and spiritual activities of numerous Vaishnava reformers particularly from the 15th century onwards.

The oldest of the Vaishnava Sampradaya is that of Ramanuja with its great temple at Brindaban of Sri Rangaji. Ramanuja flourished in the 11th century A.D. and established more than 700 maths. His philosophy is known as qualified monism or Visishta Advaita.

The Nimbarka Vaishnavas form another important Vaishnava sect at Brindaban. Kesava Kashmiri and Harivyasa Muni were the heads of the lay devotees and the ascetics respectively. They were the contemporaries of Chaitanya and Vallabha. Devotees of this sect perform mainly the Sankirtana and their main centres are at Salimabad and Brindaban. They have a number of temples at Brindaban. Their original founder is called Nimbarka because he once invited a sadhu to dine. The Sun in the meantime had set. The sadhu would eat only when there was day-time. It is said that with the prayers of Nimbarka, the Sun-god obliged them by shining for some time on the Nimba tree under which they were sitting.

Madhva (1199 to 1278) was born at Udipi in South Kanara. He became sannyasin at an early age and had received training in his early days in the system of

Sankaracharya. He was very much influenced by the *Bhagavata Purana.* His philosophy is dualistic. There is the worship of Krishna but it is without Radha. Madhva is considered an *avatara* of Vayu. After him came Jayatirtha who became the head of this sect. This school fought bitterly against the school of Sankara.

Bhagavata Purana does not directly mention Radha, though she is recognised in other Puranas. But in *Bhagavata,* Krishna moves with one Gopi more frequently. The *Gopala Tapaniya Upanishad* contains the account of Radha in detail. Isvara Puri, the ascetic of the Madhva School, won over Chaitanya to this faith. It was Chaitanya who made Sankirtanas very popular.

The Vishnuswami sect was eclipsed by those of Vallabha and Chaitanya. Vallabha calls himself the follower of Vishnuswamin. Vallabha is considered an incarnation of Agni. He places Bhakti on a higher level than Jnana. It comes by the Lord's grace which is called Pushti.

पोषणं तदनुग्रहः ।

Radha is the eternal spouse of Krishna. The four disciples of Vallabha and other four disciples of his son Vitthala—called Ashtachhap—composed religious poetry and they lived near Mathura and Brindaban. Surdas (16th century) and Dayaram (1762-1852) belonged to this school and wrote charming poetry in Hindi and Gujarati respectively.

Chaitanya, though initiated by the Madhva sannyasin Isvara Puri, went beyond the Madhva sect and gave great importance to the worship of Radha. He is influenced by Nimbarka, Madhva, Bhagavata, Jayadeva, Vidyapati and Chandidasa. Rupa, Sanatana, Jiva, Raghunatha Das, Gopala Bhatta and Raghunatha Bhatta were the six leading Goswamis of this sect. Jiva wrote the *Satsandarbha*, a philosophical work. They also wrote *Mathura-Mahatmya* which is part of the *Varaha Purana* and described therein every sacred spot of Mathura and Brindaban. They started annual Ras Lila festival and also the Vraja-Yatra, being a pilgrimage round all the sacred places of Mathura and Brindaban. The Mathura Mandala is described as having 20 Yojanas and a bath in this place is said to destroy all sins.

विंशति योंजनानां तु माथुरं मण्डलं स्मृतम् ।
यत्र तत्र नरः स्नात्वा मुच्यते सर्वपातकैः ॥

Hari Vamsa or Hit Ji founded in 1585 A.D. the Radha Vallabhi sect. Radha is more important here than Krishna. It is a Sakta sect and is influenced by the Madhva and Nimbarka schools. He founded a temple at Brindaban. Nabhaji's *Bhaktamala* says that Hit Ji was a staunch devotee but that it is difficult to understand straightway his method of devotion.

Hari Dasa Swami flourished in the 16th century and he founded the sect of Hari Dasis similar to that of Chaitanya. They have a temple in Brindaban.

Many Vaishnavas in their age of retirement come to stay at Brindaban for the rest of their lives.

The following is a pada from the *Chaurasi Pada* of Hari Vamsa or Hit Ji.

बनी राधा मोहन की जोरी ।
इन्द्र नीलमणि श्याम मनोहर सातकुंभ तन गोरी ।
भाल विसाल तिलक हरि कामिनि चिकुरचंद बिचरोरी ।
गज नाइक प्रभु चाल गयंदनि गति वृषभानु किसोरी ।
नील निचोल जुवति मोहन पटपेती अरुण सिर षोरी ।
जै श्री हितहरिवंश रसिक राधापति सुरत रंग मै बोरी ॥

"Radha and Krishna made a lovely pair. Krishna is dark and beautiful like Sapphire. Radha's body has the lustre of gold. Hari has tilak on his broad forehead. Lovely Radha has the Roli streak in her tresses; the lord moves like a royal elephant, the daughter of Vrishabhanu like an elephant queen. She has a blue garment; he has a yellow garment with a red head-dress. Rejoice O Sri Hit Hari Vamsa! Radha's loving lord is dyed deep with the colour of love."

33. CHITRAKUT

सुरम्यमासाद्य तु चित्रकूटं
नदीं च तां माल्यवतीं सुतीर्थाम् ।
ननन्द हृष्टो मृगपक्षिजुष्टां
जहौ च दुःखं पुरविप्रवासात ।।

Valmiki Ramayana—Ayodhya 56-35.

"Approaching the sacred river covered with lilies, Sri Rama rested on the lovely hill of Chitrakut. He was delighted to see it, surrounded as it was by birds and deer and so he forgot the gloom of exile from Ayodhya."

Chitrakut is the celebrated hill and place of pilgrimage in the Karwi Tahsil of Banda district, situated 23° 13′ N. and 80° 40′ E. It is about 60 miles south-west of Prayaga and 3½ miles from the Chitrakut station on the Jhansi-Manikpur Railway line.

Chitrakut is one of the most sacred places of Hindu pilgrimage. Sri Rama with Sita and Lakshmana stayed here in the Treta Yuga. The celebrated Hindi poet Tulsidasji had the vision of Sri Rama at this place. Near this hill flows the river Payasvini or Paisuni, also called Mandakini. Near Chitrakut is the town of Sitapur on the bank of the river Mandakini and it is mostly inhabited by priests. There is a Rama-ghat, also a temple of Rama and Lakshmana. Religious festivals and fairs are held in the month of Chaitra on Rama Navami day, on the Divali day, as also on days of eclipses. In the vicinity of this place, on the hill-side and on the banks of the river, there are more than 30 temples dedicated to different deities. The main spots of religious interest are Kotitirtha, Devangana, Hanumandhara, Sphatikasila, Anasuya, Guptagodavari and Bharata Kupa.

It is said that Tulsidasji used to sit here on a *chotara*, prepare sandalwood paste on a slab of stone and apply it on the forehead of Sri Rama whom he could visualise.

चित्रकूट के घाट पै भई सन्तन की भीर।
तुलसीदास चन्दन घसे तिलक देत रघुवीर॥

Kamta Nath or Kamada Nath is another name of this hill. It means "the granter of all desires." People move around this hill for a walk round or *Pancha Kroshi.* The Panna Ruler has constructed a metalled road here. On this walk one comes across Rama Chotara, Mukharavinda and Charana Paduka. The whole of this area is full of monkeys which are offered various eatables by the pilgrims.

Kotitirtha is on the hillside; there is a Kunda where a bath is taken. It is so called because crores of Rishis are said to have performed penance here. Hanumandhara is the place where there is a huge image of Hanuman on whose hand a water-stream falls from the hillside. Sphatikasila is a big stone-seat on which there are foot-prints. Legend says that Jayanta, the son of Indra, assumed the form of a crow and bit Sitaji with its beak on this Sphatikasila.

Nearby the Maharaja of Rewa has constructed the temple of Lakshmi Narayana.

At a distance of a few miles from Sitapur is situated the Ashram of Atri and Anasuya. Nearby is Guptagodavari. There is a Kunda here called Sita Kunda.

Bharata Kupa is the well where Sri Rama is said to have thrown the waters collected from all the Tirthas. When Bharata came to Chitrakut to persuade Sri Rama to come back to Ayodhya, Sri Rama in turn persuaded Bharata to be crowned and be the Ruler himself. In order to crown

Bharata, Sri Rama collected sacred waters from all the Tirtha places. On Bharata's refusal, these waters were thrown into this well, known as Bharata Kupa. A bath here is considered very sacred. It is six miles from Chobapur.

After Sri Rama, an exile, left Ayodhya, he crossed Ganga and came to Sringaverapura; there he met Guha. From him they came to the Ashrama of Sage Bharadwaja. The Sage advised Sri Rama to go to Chitrakut Hill by following the course of the Yamuna and crossing the river Amsumati in a raft; they would then see a Nyagrodha tree and at a distance of one *krosha* from that, the Neela Kanana. The sage said that that was the way leading to Chitrakut, smooth, soft and without the burning woods; that way was often trodden by the Sage himself. It was all very pleasant, green and fair to look upon (Ayodhya 55).

Sri Rama came to Chitrakut with Sita and Lakshmana. They saw the trees laden with fruits and flowers, ponderous honeycombs in leafy trees, the wild cocks, peacocks, elephants and sweet birds. They then came to the Ashrama of Sage Valmiki who entertained his guests with a fair welcome and requested them to rest there. Sri Rama performed the *vastu* ceremony with the sacrifice of a deer. He was trained in the rituals; pure from a bath and with a quiet mind, he repeated Vedic hymns. He performed *vaisvadeva* and offered oblations to Rudra and Vishnu. In this way he performed the *vastu* ceremony to protect his newly built home. He said his silent *japa* (prayer), bathed again in the river and offered the *bali* or offering that removes the stain of sin. He then prepared altars and shrines to suit his newly constructed cottage. After this the three of them entered the cottage. (Ayodhya 56).

Bharata with an army followed Sri Rama to persuade him to come back. He came to the Ashrama of Sage

Bharadwaja. The Sage asked Bharata to tell the story of each one of his Royal mothers. Bharata narrated thus:

"She whom you see here like a goddess was the chief consort of the King. She is now worn out with fast and sorrowing. Like Aditi to Dhatri, this Kausalya gave birth to the lion-like Rama. On her left arm is hanging fondly Sumitra, the second consort of the king, pained with woe and appearing like the branch of karnikara tree whose flowers are withered away—she is the mother of two brave and god-like princes Lakshmana and Satrughna. And that wicked dame who has caused gloom to my brothers and sent our mourning father to heaven, that proud, foolish, irritable, self-imagined beauty, ambitious Queen—*arya* in appearance but *un-arya* in nature—she is Kaikeyi, my mother, whose unholy will is the cause of all the woe which crushes me!" So saying, prince Bharata, his eyes red with weeping, puffed like a furious snake. Sage Bharadwaja told Bharata not to look down upon Kaikeyi and stated that the exile of Rama was for the benefit of humanity. Bharata went further in search of Rama towards Chitrakut. They saw the smoke rising from sacrificial altars. Bharata asked his army to stand aside and went on further in the company of Sumantra and Dhriti. Here the impact of the army drove the forest beasts toward Rama's cottage. Lakshmana climbed up a tree and saw Bharata's army. He suspected mischief and angrily sought Rama's permission to destroy Bharata for whose sake all the trouble was created by Kaikeyi. Rama consoled Lakshmana and vowed: "If I seek any bliss without Bharata, yourself or Satrughna—let that bliss be turned into ashes by the flames of fire!"

यद् विना भरतं त्वां च शत्रुघ्नं वाऽपि मानद ।
भवेन्मम सुखं किंचिद् भस्म तत्कुरुतां शिखी ॥

—*Ayodhya* 97-8.

Rama said that if he so advised, Bharata would immediately give over the entire kingdom to Lakshmana.

उच्यमानो हि भरतो मया लक्ष्मण तद्वचः ।
राज्यमस्मै प्रयच्छेति बाढमित्येव मंस्यते ।।

—*Ayodhya* 97-18.

On hearing Rama's confident, affectionate and reassuring words regarding Bharata, Lakshmana felt ashamed and became cool. Bharata came, cried and fell at Rama's feet. "Arya!"—this was the only word he could address Rama.

उक्त्वार्येति सकृद्दीनं पुनर्नोवाच किंचन ।

—*Ayodhya* 100-38.

Brave Satrughna also wept aloud. Rama with tears running fast, cast his arms around his brothers. Rama raised up Bharata, kissed and breathed deeply over his head, embraced him and placed him on his lap. Bharata gave the news of Dasaratha's death, and said that Rama was now in the father's place. Rama embraced him and directed him to enjoy the kingdom. Bharata, Sage Jabala, and Sage Vasishtha requested Rama to take up the reins of the Government as the Ruler. Rama utters his famous vow:

लक्ष्मीश्चन्द्रादपेयाद् वा हिमवान् वा हिमं त्यजेत् ।
अतीयात् सागरो वेलां न प्रतिज्ञां अहं पितुः ।।

—*Ayodhya* 112-18.

"The Moon may forgo his beauty, the Himalaya may forsake the snow, the ocean may sweep over its fixed line of the shore—but I shall keep the word of my father." He addressed Bharata: "Your mother might have been led to this action by love for you or greed. But remove from your mind the memory of that and show to her your filial love and reverence. This is Sita's earnest prayer and mine."

This memorable vow was taken by Sri Rama on the Chitrakut Hill.

Ultimately Bharata took Rama's sandals, promised to rule in the name of Padukas for 14 years, lead the life of an ascetic and if Rama did not return after 14 years, he threatened to enter fire. Rama took leave of all of them, saluted them and permitted them to go. He stood steadfast in his duty like the king of mountains—Himalaya. Bharata took with him the Padukas and stayed at Nandigrama. Rama moved further and came to the Asrama of Sage Atri and his wife Anasuya.

Legend says that on account of her *Satitva,* Anasuya made Ganga flow at this place after a famine of a number of years and this river is called Mandakini.

Ramayana says that the Chitrakut Hill was situated 10 *kroshas* away from the Asrama of Sage Bharadwaja which was near Prayaga. This Chitrakut is also known as a Pitrithirtha and Kalidasa in *Meghaduta* calls it Ramagiri. In *Raghuvamsha* 13-47, Rama says to Sita on his journey from Lanka to Ayodhya:

धारास्वनोद्गारिदरीमुखोऽसौ शृंगाग्रलग्नाम्बुदवप्रपंकः ।
वध्नाति मे बन्धुरगात्रि ! चक्षुर् दृप्तः ककुद्मानिव चित्रकूटः ॥

"Lady of lovely limbs: this hill of Chitrakut attracts my eye. It appears like a proud majestic bull. The sound of the falling streams is the bull's bellowing. Its cave is the bull's wide open mouth. The cloud on the top of the Hill is the mud raised up by this bull in sport and stuck to the ends of the horns."

Tulsidasji (1531 to 1623 A.D.), son of Atmaram Dube and Hulsi, was born at Rajapur which is about 20 miles from Chitrakut. His Guru was Naraharidasji. Being born in the inauspicious Moola Nakshatra, he was given up by his father. His Guru took him to Banaras at the

Ramanandi Math on the Panch-ganga ghat. There he met Sesha Sanatanji, a great scholar. He married Ratnavali, daughter of Dinabandhu Pathak. He was much enamoured of her; so one day she taunted him:

अस्थिचरममय देह् मम तामें जैसी प्रीति ।
तैसी जो श्रीराम में होति न तो भवभीति ।।

"Instead of wasting your devotion on my bones and skin, if you direct it on Sri Rama you will have no reason to fear any further re-births."

This taunt changed the course of Tulsidasji's life. He left home, became an ascetic devotee of Sri Rama and moved on a *yatra* for 20 years. He stayed at Ayodhya for four months, moved to other sacred places and then stayed long at Chitrakut. There he is said to have had the vision of Sri Rama. Many saints gathered to see him. He met a number of friends including poet Surdas. He then returned to Ayodhya and started composing his celebrated *Rama-Charita-Manasa* on Tuesday, 30th March 1574 A.D.

Legend says that once a ghost living on a mango tree watered by Tulsidasji was pleased and told him to ask for a boon. Tulsidasji wished for a vision of Sri Rama. The ghost directed him to Hanuman, who, according to him, came regularly to hear the recitation of Ramayana at a temple. Tulsidasji did as he was told, met Hanuman and with his grace he chanced to see Rama Leela at Chitrakut with Rama and others actually present. Tulsidasji thus describes the securing of Rama's sandal by Bharata at Chitrakut:

चरनपीठ करुनानिधान के । जनु जुग जामिक प्रजा प्रान के ।।
संपुट भरत सनेह् रतन के । आखर जुग जनु जीव जतन के ।।

कुल कपाट कर कुसलकर्म के। विमल नयन सेवा सुधर्म के ॥
भरत मुदि अवलंब लहेते। अस सुख जस सियराम रहेते ॥

—*Ayodhya Kanda* 307, 5 to 8.
Tulsidasji's *Ramacharitramanasa.*

"The sandals of the Lord who was the ocean of mercy were like the two guardians of the life of people, the box to keep the jewel of Bharata's affection; they were the two syllables 'Ra' and 'Ma' of the Maha Mantra for the liberation of souls: the two doors of Raghu's dynasty, the two hands of virtue; the two pure eyes of Service and Duty. On securing this consolation, Bharata became happy as if he was in company of Sita and Sri Rama."

34. TANJORE

सर्वाङ्गकुष्ठनिर्मुक्तो राजा सोम इवाबभौ ।

—*Brihadisvara Mahatmya.*

"The king was freed from his disease of black leprosy afflicting his whole body and in lustre he appeared like the moon."

Tanjore, the headquarters of the Tanjore District and once the capital of the Chola, Nayak and Maratha Rulers, is situated in the delta of river Cauvery 10-47 N. and 79-10 E. The etymology of the word Tanjore is obscure but it is said to have been derived from Tanjan, a demon, who was haunting the locality and who was according to the legend destroyed by God Vishnu. His dying request was that the city should be named after him and it was granted. Another derivation is from Tanjam, meaning refuge, the city being called thus "the city of refuge."

In Tanjore is situated the great Brihadisvara Temple of Siva, founded by the Chola King Rajaraja I (985 to 1013 A.D.). This great pagoda, considered "by far the grandest in India" was commenced on a well-defined and stately plan, which was pursued till its completion. It is situated in the southern half of the small fort of Tanjore. This temple was built with all its necessary adjuncts complete in the life-time of the founder himself. In 1009-10 A.D. on the 257th day of the year, the Chola King Rajaraja I handed over the copper pot for the top of the Vimana. This temple was named Rajarajeshwaram by the founder.

Brihadisvara Mahatmya is a collection of local legends and is a part of the Bhavishyottara Purana. It has been observed that most of it was written at a time when nothing of the true history of the Tanjore Cholas was remembered.

According to this Mahatmya, the Chola King was suffering from black leprosy. He requested his Guru Haradatta to find a remedy. From his Guru the king learnt that as he had inflicted injuries on animals in the previous birth as a hunter, he was suffering in that way. The cure recommended was to build to Lord Shiva a great temple with a tall gopura. The Sivalinga was to be brought from river Narmada. After it was taken out of the water, this Siva-linga increased in size and therefore it was named Brihadisvara. The king was also to build a temple for Goddess Brihannayaki and instal a big Nandi. A silpi named Soma Varma was also recommended for the purpose. The king went to Narmada with 64 merchants and brought the Sivalinga within six months. The construction of the temple took twelve years. After Brihadisvara was installed and the Kumbhabhisheka celebrated with liberal grants, the king took his bath in the tank, "was cured of his black leprosy and shone in lustre like the moon."

This legend of the leprosy of King Karikala is in direct conflict with the inscriptions on the walls of the temple. There are 64 inscriptions of Rajaraja I and many more of subsequent rulers. They are in good condition and are mostly collected in the South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. II. On the 20th day of the 26th year of his reign, King Rajaraja I, the great founder of this temple, issued the royal command "to engrave on the sacred central walls of the Sri Vimana of the stone temple to Rajarajeswara raised by us in Tanjavur, gifts by ourselves, by our elder sister and by our queens and by others."

This Rajaraja I, like his great grandfather Parantaka I, made large additions to the temple at Chidambaram by building Mandapas, shrines etc. and he donated large amounts for the upkeep of festivities. Though a devout Saiva himself, Rajaraja I showed great toleration to other religious creeds and he made rich donations to the Buddhist temple built at Negapatam. The ruler, his elder sister, his queens, his son, his generals and officers all made munificent gifts to the temple of Rajarajeswara or Brihadisvara and this had been one of the main causes of the endearment of this king throughout the territory. The Cholas, under Rajaraja I and his famous son Rajendra Chola I conquered nearly the whole of the State of Madras, went as far as Ganges and asserted their authority over several overseas territories including Ceylon, Nicobar Islands and parts of Malaya peninsula and the Archipelago. Rajaraja I had great admiration for the Saivite saints Appar, Sambandar, Sundara and Manikkavasagar. He provided for the recitation of their hymns and also installed their images in the temple. He brought from several places beautiful damsels famous for their dancing and music, got them settled in Tanjore and provided liberally for their maintenance. He opened halls and theatres for the performances of the artistes. A drama called Rajesvara Nataka was enacted in the temple.

The Brihadisvara temple occupies a large portion of the southern half of the small fort. It is encircled by a moat on the east and west. On the north there are Sivaganga gardens. The entrance is to the east. The temple consists of two courts. The outer court, a square of about 250 feet was originally devoted to minor shrines and residences but the French in 1777 A.D. converted it into an arsenal. The temple proper is in a courtyard 500 feet x 250 feet. The main shrine of Brihadisvara in the western end of this courtyard has the Garbhagriha, Ardhamandapa, Mahamandapa, Sthapana-Mandapa, Nartana Mandapa and the Vadya Mandapa.

The outer gopuram is considered to be of much later date and probably belongs to the early 16th century.

The portals of the temple are guarded by huge Dwarapalakas.

The main deity, Brihadisvara, is also called Adavallan and Dakshina-Meru Vitankan. These names are also the names of the Chidambaram deity. The Goddess is called Brihannayaki and the tower is called Dakshina-Meru.

The great Vimana is 216 feet high with 14 storeys. The Sikhara is crowned by a massive dome consisting of a single block of stone. It is said that this huge block of stone was carried to this immense height by being rolled along an inclined road, about four miles long specially built for the purpose. The whole of this massive structure is decorated from top to the base with elaborate sculpturings, images of the Hindu Pantheon and decorative mouldings. It occupies the centre of the courtyard in such a way that the whole area is dominated by this high tower over the shrine. "This tower dominates over the gopurams and surrounding objects in a manner that imparts great dignity to the whole composition." (Fergusson). The Sivalinga is about 4 feet high and 7 feet in circumference.

By the side of the main temple there are several other smaller shrines in this enclosure. One of them is dedicated to Subrahmanyam or Kartikeya, son of Siva and is "as exquisite a piece of architecture as is to be found in the South of India, and though small, almost divides our admiration, with the temple itself" (Fergusson). It has a tower 55 feet high on a base 45 feet square. It is considered "a perfect gem of carved stone work, the tooling of the stone in the most elaborate patterns, remaining as clear and sharp as the day it left the sculptor's hands." It is said to belong to the Naik period, about 1600 A.D.

The shrine of Brihannayaki, the Goddess, is situated between the Nandi Mandapam and the Brihadisvara temple. It is believed to be an addition by a Pandya King in the 13th century. The shrine of Ganapati is in the south-western corner, of Nataraja in the north-eastern corner and of Chandesvara in the north-western compound.

The great Nandi placed in a Mandapa is very massive and striking. It is 12 feet high, 19½ feet long and 8¼ feet broad. This Nandi is considered the second biggest in India, the biggest being at Lepakshi temple in the Anantapur District. The Brihadisvara's Nandi is 25 tons in weight. One version says that the stone was brought from Pachchaimalai in the Trichinopoly District. Another version says that it came from the bed of Narmada. Tradition says that this Nandi was imperceptibly growing in size every day with the passage of time; but that after a nail was driven in its back it has remained stationary.

Many of the motifs in the sculptures, particularly on the gopurams, are drawn from the Vaishnavite legends. The scene of Buddha's enlightenment is also depicted on the outer eastern side of the parapet. On the northern side of the main Vimana four human figures are seen one above the other in a line. There is a man's head, with a bowler hat. It is believed to be the figure of a European. Some say it is a Dane figure of 1620 A.D.; others believe it might be of Marco Polo, the great Venetian traveller who might have passed through South India on his way back home in about 1288-93 A.D.

Sri S. K. Govindaswamy has discovered Chola fresco paintings in the circumambulatory corridor of the Ardha-Mandapa.

The religious rituals of the temple are according to the Mukuta Agama, says Shri Somasundaram, and reference is given to the Tanjore Palace Saraswati Mahal Library Granth No. 15269 and Burnell's list No. 11428. Sri Tyagaraja, also called Vitankar, is worshipped in the Sthapana Mandapa and is the patron deity of the Cholas. The chief festival is the Brahmotsavam which lasts for 18 days in April-May.

The name of Tanjore is linked with the Cholas who have left in this great Brihadisvara temple "a striking relic of their genius." Rajendra Chola I moved his capital from Tanjore to Gangai-konda-cholapuram in the Trichinopoly District. The importance of Tanjore decreased in the 11th century. Nothing is known of what happened to it between 1300 and 1550 A.D., till the Naiks came to power. The inscriptions of the Vijayanagar Rulers of the 15th century are found in Tanjore. The Naiks acquired this district and made it their capital. Sevappa Naik (1549 to 1572 A.D.) founded the dynasty of Tanjore Naiks. It remained with them for 125 years till the death of Vijayaraghava. For 14 years Alagiri ruled it. Then Venkaji or Ekoji, the half-brother of Sivaji the great, founded in 1676 A.D. the Maratha dynasty which lasted for the next 179 years. These years witnessed the conflicts of the Marathas with the Moghuls, the Nawabs of Karnatak and the French. The English interfered in 1749 A.D. to restore the deposed Raja Sayaji. The French, under Lally, attacked it in 1758 A.D. It was retaken by Colonel Smith in 1773 A.D. In 1776 A.D.

Tanjore was made a protected State. Hyder invaded it in 1781 A.D. In 1799 A.D. it was made a British Principality and its Ruler Sarafoji II was given the fort of Tanjore. His successor Shivaji died on October 29, 1855 A.D. and after him the line became extinct.

Tanjore is famous for silken cloth and metal work. There are two forts in the city; the small fort of Sevappa and the large fort of Vijayaraghava. The large fort contains the palace of the old Rajahs.

The Maharaja Sarafoji's Saraswati Mahal Library has a remarkable collection of about 33,433 Sanskrit and vernacular palm-leaf manuscripts and 6426 printed volumes. It is considered unique in India. Dr. Burnall who has catalogued the Sanskrit manuscripts, which are the largest in number, thinks they were mostly collected during the 300 years of the rule of Naiks and Marathas. There are also numerous manuscripts in the Modi script.

The Brihadisvara temple of Tanjore has excited the admiration of Fergusson who remarks that, in nine out of ten, Dravidian temples are a fortuitous aggregation of parts, arranged without plan, as chance dictated at the time of their creation, and that the one exception to this rule is to be found at Tanjore where the temple was commenced on a well-defined and stately plan, and carried through to its completion.

The Chola art is characterised by a massive grandeur. The huge pieces of structure are decorated with minute carvings which involve immense labour. Fergusson says "the Chola artists conceived like giants and finished like jewellers."

Lord Brihadisvara is so named because the linga started to increase after it was taken out from Narmada waters. The Atharvasiras Upanishad-62 says that Lord Siva has enveloped the entire universe: It is in Rigveda 10-81-3, also in Svetasvatara 3-3.

> विश्वतश्चक्षुरुत विश्वतो मुखो विश्वतो बाहुरुत विश्वतस्पात् ।
> सं बाहुभ्यां धर्मात संपतत्रै द्यावाभूमी जनयन् देव एकः ॥
>
> —*Rigveda* 10-81-3; Svetasvatara 3-3; Atharvasiras-62.

"His eyes, mouth, hands and feet are everywhere and face all directions. With his hands and his moving feet he impels the universe into activity. This one self-luminous God has created the Heaven and earth."

35. AMARKANTAK

चन्द्रसूर्योपरागे तु गत्वा ह्यमरकण्टकम् ।
अश्वमेधाद् दशगुणं पुण्यमाप्नोति मानवः ।।
एष पुण्यो गिरिवरो देवगन्धर्वसेवितः ।
नानाद्रुमलताकीर्णो नानापुष्पोपशोभितः ।।
अत्र सन्निहितो राजन् देव्या सह महेश्वरः ।
ब्रह्मा विष्णुस्तथा चेन्द्रो विद्याधरगणैः सह ।।
प्रदक्षिणं तु यः कुर्यात्पर्वतामरकण्टके ।
पौण्डरीकस्य यज्ञस्य फलं प्राप्नोति मानवः ।।

—*Kurma in Varamitrodaya Tirthaprakasa,*
p. 382.

"*One who visits Amarkantak on the days of the lunar and solar eclipses acquires a merit which is ten times that acquired after performing an Asvamedha sacrifice. This sacred mount has been resorted to by gods and gandharvas; it is full of numerous trees, creepers and flowers. Here is Lord Siva with Uma, also Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and the Vidyadharas. One making a circumambulation of this Amarkantak mount acquires the merit of having performed the sacrifice of Paundarika.*"

River Narmada is considered next to the Ganga in point of sacredness. This Narmada, the Namados of Ptolemy and Namnadios of the Periplus rises on the summit of the plateau of Amarkantak which is situated 22° 41′ N. and 81° 48′ E. Amarkantak is part of the Mekala or Mikul hills, forming its extreme eastern peak, in Gondwada. Its height is 3493 feet above the sea level. On the railway line connecting Bilaspur with Katni, we arrive at Pendra Road station. Amarkantak is about seven miles from this station.

Rivers Narmada, Son and Mahanadi, have their sources on this plateau of Amarkantak. It is a very famous spot of pilgrimage. Pilgrims generally make it a point to pay a visit to this place on their way to or from Jagannath Puri.

On this hill of Amarkantak there are temples of Amarnath Mahadeo, Narmada Devi, several other Saiva and Vaishnava temples and the holy kunda at the head of the infant river Narmada which is considered very sacred. There is also the deserted temple known as the Karan Mandir which is traditionally ascribed to Karna Raja and which is of some architectural interest.

Amarkantak forms the eastern part of the Vindhya range. The Vindhya is one of the seven principal ranges of mountains called Kulaparvatas. They are Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Suktiman, Riksha, Vindhya and Pariyatra.

ततो वर्षं प्रवक्ष्यामि यथाश्रुतमहो द्विजाः ।
महेन्द्रो मलयः सह्यः शुक्तिमानृक्षवानपि ।
विन्ध्यश्च पारियात्रश्च सप्तैते कुलपर्वताः ॥

—*Padma, Adi,* Ch. 6 Verses 7 & 8.

Amarkantak is referred to as Amrakuta by Kalidasa in Meghaduta 17. Chitrakuta in Meghaduta means the Ramagiri hill and not the famous Chitrakut near Prayag. The cloud is requested to go from Ramgiri near Amarkantak and then to Amrakuta or Amarkantak proper.

त्वामासारप्रशमितवनोपप्लवं साधु मूर्ध्ना वक्ष्यत्यध्वश्रमपरिगतं सानु-
मानाम्रकूटः ।
न क्षुद्रोऽपि प्रथमसुकृतापेक्षया संश्रयाय प्राप्ते मित्रे भवति विमुखः किं
पुनर्यस्तथोच्चैः ॥

—*Meghaduta* 17.

After having rested for a while on Chitrakuta or Ramgiri hill, the cloud is requested to finish its rest on the Amrakuta or Amarkantak hill.

"The Amrakuta with its lofty peak will receive you on its summit. You would have extinguished the forest fire with your incessant rain and got tired on your way. Even a small man does not refuse hospitality to a friend who has previously obliged him and who subsequently comes for shelter; why talk about a person so lofty?"

The hill is called Amrakuta probably because of the numerous mango trees on its summit.

From the kund or reservoir, the small stream of Narmada runs westwards and after a further course of about two miles, falls over a descent of about 70 feet with great force. This spot is known as Kapil Dhaara.

The deserted or neglected Karan Mandir was never completed, having three temples on three sides of a square, the fourth side remaining unoccupied and the platform at that end broken. Cunningham has compared this temple with the smaller temple at Khajuraho, and spoken highly of its bold and elegant mouldings.

Mekala is another name of mount Amarkantak which is a part of the Vindhya range. River Narmada which has its source here is therefore called the Mekala Kanyaka in the Amarakosha.

रेवा तु नर्मदा सोमोद्भवा मेकलकन्यका ।

Skanda in Avantya Khanda has the third sub-khanda called Reva-khanda of 232 Adhyayas. In Chapter 21 it is stated that river Narmada is capable of destroying all sins. River Ganga is sacred at Kankhal, river Saraswati at Kurukshetra but river Narmada is sacred everywhere whether it is a town or a forest. The waters of Saraswati purify a person in three days, those of Yamuna in seven days, those of Ganga immediately, but river Narmada purifies a person by mere sight. This river Narmada rises from Mount Amarkantak which is on the western side of the Kalinga country. The river is sacred in the three worlds and of pleasing sight at every step.

कलिगदेशात् पश्चार्द्धे पर्वतेऽमरकण्टके ।
पुण्या च त्रिषु लोकेषु रमणीया पदे पदे ॥

Kalinga Desa is the Northern Sircars, south of Orissa and north of the Dravida Desa and touching the Bay of Bengal on the east. In the days of Mahabharata, a portion of Orissa or Utkala was also included in Kalinga.

Padma, Adhikhanda Chapter 6, verses 35 and 36 make a separate mention of Mekalas, Utkalas and Kalingas as forming the several janapadas.

उत्तमाश्च दशार्णाश्च मेकलाश्चोत्कलैः सह् ।
पान्चालाः कोशलाश्चैव नकपृष्ठयुगन्धराः ।
बोधा मद्राः कलिङ्गाश्च काशयोऽपरकाशयः ॥

At the source and on the banks of this Narmada, gods, gandharvas, sages and ascetics are said to have performed penance and attained high siddhis. If a person observing the rules and with his senses controlled bathes here and observes a fast for one night, he is said to liberate 100 of his ancestors. Mount Amarkantak has been described as a great siddhi-kshetra. Lord Sankara abides here.

River Narmada is described as 100 yojanas in length and 2 yojanas in breadth according to Kurma, while Skanda gives one half yojana as the breadth. The actual measurement of its length is estimated to be 801 miles; its breadth varies at different places from a few yards to 17 miles below Broach city where it gradually widens into an estuary and joins the gulf of Cambay.

From Amarkantak to the sea near Broach there are numerous Tirthas. Matsya and Padma state there are 10 crores of such Tirthas; Agni, Kurma and Skanda state they are 60 crores and 60 thousand. Out of them 400 are the chief ones according to Naradiya. Skanda adds that in this Kali age, the Pratyaksha Tirthas are few as men are losing their spiritual strength.

The Reva and the Narmada are generally taken to be synonyms and the Reva Khanda of the Skanda treats them as one but Bhagavata 5-19-18 and Vamana 13-25-29 mention them separately and the Reva is said to rise from the Vindhya and Narmada from Rikshpada. Dr. B. C. Law observes that the two separate streams of Reva and Narmada meet near Mandla and thereafter the two names are used indiscriminately for the river.

The word Amarkantak is derived by Skanda in this way: Amaras means gods and 'kata' means body. Narmada smilingly danced on the bodies of gods. The mount surrounded by these bodies of the gods is called Amarkantak.

Narmada is called Rudra-Sambhavaa or born from the body of Lord Siva.

> नर्मदा सरितां श्रेष्ठा रुद्रदेहाद् विनिस्सृता ।
>
> —*Padma, Adi,* 17-13.

As Amarkantak is the abode of Lord Siva (Skanda Reva Ch. 21) and the Narmada springs from that mount, she is called Rudra's daughter. The legend is told in Skanda Reva 4. Siva was once practising penance on the Riksha mount. He perspired and from the moisture sprang this river. She assumed the form of a woman and worshipped Siva. She sought the boon of being sacred and inexhaustible. She is known as A-yonija, not born of the womb, and A-mrita, undying even in the Pralaya. She is called Narmada because she caused amusement by appearing for some time and then disappearing in turn when the gods and demons were running after her. This legend refers to the dancing and rugged course of this river in her initial stages.

It appears that in the country round about Amarkantak Gonds originally resided. From them the country went to the Haihaya Vamsi dynasty which ruled from Ratnapur. This dynasty traces its antiquity to the Satya Yuga. One of its descendants, Nila Dvaja, established a kingdom at Mahishmati or Mandla; another, by name Hansa Dvaja at Chandrapur and a third at Ratanpur, sometimes also identified with Manipur. The last kingdom alone survived till the last Raja, by name Raghunath Singh, was deposed by the Marathas in 1745 A.D. Raja Karnapal of this line reigned from 115 to 194 A.D. He built a city at Amarkantak and raised temples there. It is said that he consecrated the spot at the source of the Narmada which has become a holy spot for pilgrimage.

Religious suicide at Amarkantak has been highly eulogised. One observing Brahmacharya, remaining pure, self-controlled, free from anger, desisting from all *Himsa* and thinking of the good of all creatures—if such a person gives up his life at Amarkantak, he is promised a stay of one lac of years in heaven and then the next birth of a king. Religious suicide by entering the fire or water or by fasting is said to bring liberation from a succession of rebirths.

The Jalesvara reservoir is stated to be on the western side of this mount and Shraddha performed here produces great merit. River Narmada is called the daughter of Pitris and Shraddhas performed on her banks produce everlasting results. It is said that the Narmada is so sacred that even trees which fall down into her waters achieve the highest *gati*. The confluence of the Narmada, Kapila and Visalya has been considered holy.

ओंकारतीर्थमारभ्य यावत्पश्चिमसागरम् ।
संगमाः पञ्चत्रिंशद् वै नदीनां पापनाशनाः ॥

—*Skanda, Reva* 231-7.

It is said that during her entire course, the Narmada makes 35 confluences or Sangamas. On the Northern bank there are eleven Sangamas and on the southern bank there are twenty-three of them. The 35th Sangama is that of the Reva and the sea which is the best.

Padma, Adi, ch. 15 describes the legend of Bana and his three Puras. Siva made preparations for their destruction. The various gods became His implements of war. When they were pierced with the arrow, the three puras were in commotion. Bana, however, worshipped Siva and appealed that the linga in his possession should not be destroyed. Siva was propitiated and He granted him a boon. The third city of Bana was protected and he became long-lived and invincible. But the first two cities were burnt. One of these two burnt cities fell at Srisaila and the other at Amarkantak.

एकं निपातितं तस्य श्रीशैले त्रिपुरान्तके ।
द्वितीयं पातितं तत्र पर्वतेऽमरकण्टके ॥

—*Padma, Adi,* 16-68.

Every year several pilgrims perform the *pradakshina* of river Narmada. They start from Broach and walking consistently on one bank of the river, they reach her source at Amarkantak and they reach back the Reva-Sagar sangama by the other bank. The pilgrimage is considered to be of highly religious efficacy.

This great river, surrounded at its source at Amarkantak by numerous temples, first falls at Kapiladhara in a descent of about 70 to 80 feet. It passes from the rugged hills of Mandla. Towards Jubbulpore it makes a narrow loop and has a fall of 30 feet called Dhua-Dhara.

It then moves through rocks of marble and flows west in the Narmada Valley between the Vindhya and the Satpara ranges. Parts of the hills near the banks are covered with dense forests.

The river passes through the old capital of the Holkar dynasty. The last 170 miles of the river are through the State of Bombay. Near Broach or Bhrigukatchha, which was the residence of sage Bhrigu, she meets the sea. It is called Reva because it leaps in the rocky bed. On her banks are dense forests and rocks; she dashes, jumps, rushes and dances through high rocks and valleys; she also runs smoothly and peacefully for several miles. She is Rudrakanya and makes one realise that Lord Sankara is both Rudra in the furious aspect and Siva in the benevolent aspect.

Vishnupurana says that anyone saluting the Narmada thrice in a day has no fear from serpent poison.

Siddhantasekhara, quoting in Viramitradaya, Lakshana Prakasa, p. 600, states that a Linga of Siva found in a river and which has become smooth by friction is called Rauha. Such a linga found in the river Narmada is like the Bana Linga and is fit to be installed in all houses and Peeths.

नर्मदासम्भवं लिङ्गं वाणलिङ्गवदीरितम् ।
सर्वप्रासादयोग्यं च सर्वपीठार्हकं मतम् ॥
नमोऽस्तु ते धर्मभृते वरानने नमोऽस्तु ते देवगणैकवन्दिते ।
नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वपवित्रपावने नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वजगत्सुपूजिते ॥

—*Padma, Adi.* 17-18.

"Salutations to You who are the protector of Dharma, of pleasing appearance, worshipped by all the Gods, who purifies even all sacred things and who are adored by all."

36. VIJAYANAGAR

कोकामुखे कुरुक्षेत्रे नैमिषे ऋषिसंगमे ।
वाराणस्यां प्रभासे च तथा बदरिकाश्रमे ॥
गङ्गाद्वारे प्रयागे च गङ्गासागरसङ्गमे ।
रुद्रकोटयां **विरूपाशे** मित्रस्यापि वने तथा ॥
तीर्थेष्वेतेषु सिद्धिर्या क्षेत्रेषु द्वादशाब्दिका ।
प्राप्यते मानवै र्लोके षण्मासाद् राजसत्तम ॥

—*Padma Purana, Srishti*, Ch. 17, Verses 102 to 104.

"*That Siddhi which is acquired after twelve years of penance at other places is acquired within six months at the following places: Kokamukha (the Varahakshetra in the Purnea district of Bengal), Kurukshetra, Naimisha (Nimsar near Lucknow) where sixty thousand sages had collected together, Banaras, Prabhasa, Badarikasram, Hardwar, Prayaga, the confluence of the Ganges and the ocean, Rudrakoti (at Kurukshetra or Amarkantak), 'Virupaksha' (in Hampi) and Mitra Vana (Konarak in Orissa).*"

Hampi (Kannad for Pampa) stands on the southern bank of river Tungabhadra in the Hospet taluk of the Bellary district and is about nine miles from the town of Hospet. It is the seat of the great Pampapati or Virupaksha temple of Lord Siva, the patron-deity and family God of the Kings of Vijayanagar. It was the oldest and the most sacred temple of Vijayanagar. It has miraculously escaped destruction, which was the fate of Vijayanagar after the battle of Talikota in A.D. 1565. The description of this temple as given by the Portuguese traveller, Paes, who visited it in the reign of Krishna Deva Raya and published in Sewell's book shows that the temple had much the same appearance then as it has now.

This great and ancient temple of Hampi or Pampapati originally had a small village round about it. Everything in its vicinity points out its great antiquity. Sewell estimated that the old temple belonged to the seventh century. Long before the grand Vijayanagar Empire had come and gone, it was a spot where there was nothing but nature in one of her wildest moods. On one side there were huge boulders and lofty hills scattered here and there, on the other there were green trees and grass on the low ground. River Tungabhadra was flowing nearby; it was a lonely spot fit for meditation. On the other side of the river was Anegundi, which was the populated area. As has been noted above in *Paḍma, Srishti,* Ch. 17, this sacred spot was placed in line with Banaras, Badari, Prayaga and others and was specially holy for penance and meditation. The majesty of huge tumbled boulders, the river, isolation, solitude and wild nature must naturally have attracted a number of sages and ascetics to this spot. Sage Vidyaranya or Madhava also used it for his meditation. Pampa is another name of river Tungabhadra. Pampadevi is considered the daughter of Brahma and she performed penance on the Hemakuta Hill. Visvesvara appeared before her and made her his consort. His other consort was Bhuvanesvari.

Deriving inspiration from the celebrated sage and philosopher, Madhava or Vidyaranya, Harihara and Bukka, two of the five sons of Sangama, laid in A.D. 1336 the foundation of the city; and the kingdom of Vijayanagar was named after their Guru Vidyaranya. They made Pampapati or Virupaksha their patron deity and family god. On the northern bank of the river was the fort of Anegundi and Vijayanagar was on the southern bank. This is the traditional account. Father Heras holds the opinion that the city of Anegundi was the cradle of the Vijayanagar Empire and that the city was founded by the Hoysala king, Vira Ballala III.

Most authorities, however, agree that Vijayanagar was founded in A.D. 1336 by Harihara and Bukka and that their Guru Madhava became the first minister of their new state. For about three hundred years this empire remained as a bulwark against the onrush of alien culture and ideas, withstood invasion from the surrounding areas and stood up in support of the traditional religion and culture of the country. Vijayanagar became the Dakshina Kasi and Virupaksha was famous as one of the 108 Divya Kshetras of Bharat. The first dynasty of Vijayanagar is named after Sangama, who was the father of Harihara I and Bukka I. These rulers adopted for their crest the Varaha or the Boar. After Harihara I came Bukka I who became even more famous. In 1374, Bukka I sent an embassy to China. He was a very tolerant ruler and brought about a reconciliation between the Jains and Vaishnavas in A.D. 1368. He called the leaders of both sects, and taking the hand of a Jain and placing it on the head of a Vaishnava; the wise ruler decreed that each of them should follow his own religion with equal freedom and without fear. This decree was sent round to and published at various places.

Bukka I was succeeded by Harihara II who assumed imperial titles. He is eulogised for making sixteen great gifts to various temples situated in localities ranging from Kurnool to Kumbakonam. He extended his sway over the whole of South India. He was a devout worshipper of Lord Siva, Virupaksha, though tolerant of other faiths. There were constant fights between the Vijayanagar Empire and the Badami kingdom. There were nine kings in his first Sangama dynasty which had come to power after the decline of Hoysalas and Yadavas, and it remained in power from 1336 to 1486 A.D. To save the kingdom from invasions from various quarters, Narasimha Saluva deposed his worthless master and seized the throne for himself in 1486 A.D. This Narasimha entrusted the administration to his General Narsa Naik. After the death of his master, this Narsa Naik placed on the throne Immadi Narasimha, the son of Narasimha Saluva. There were only two rulers of the Saluva dynasty. The last Saluva ruler was deposed by Vira Narasimha, Narsa Naik's son of the Taluva dynasty. This Vira Narasimha, himself a pious king, was succeeded by his younger half-brother, Krishna Deva Raya, the greatest among Vijayanagar rulers and one of the most distinguished kings of India. He extended his Empire from Cuttack to Salsette, to the extreme south and certain islands in the Indian Ocean. He was friendly with the Portuguese and the Portuguese traveller, Paes, calls him the most learned and perfect king of cheerful disposition, who was kind to foreigners. In his reign, the Vijayanagar Empire was at its zenith of glory and prosperity. He was a great patron of Sanskrit and Telugu literature and he himself wrote his great work Amuktamalyada in Telugu in which he refers to his other five works in Sanskrit. In his court there were eight famous poets called the Ashtadiggajas, and the Poet Laureate was Peddana. Dhurjati was another famous poet. It is said that Krishna Deva Raya desired to know from other poets as to how it was that Dhurjati could bring extraordinary sweetness to his poetic compositions. One of the court poets, Tenali Ramakrishna, a humorous writer and the author of "Panduranga Mahatmya" investigated the "secret" and reported in the open court that the sweetness was traceable to the constant contact of Poet Dhurjati with the sweet lips of his mistress!

On Krishna Deva Raya's death, his half-brother Achyuta Raya ascended the throne. He relaxed his personal control and his Viceroys who were three brothers, Rama Raya, Tirumala and Venkata of the Arividu dynasty became powerful. After Achyuta Raya came Venkata I and then Sadasiva Raya, but the power was with Rama Raya, the Minister. Rama Raya was the virtual ruler and he possessed great abilities. He became overconfident and haughty and by his changing alliances, he alienated the sympathies of the people of his neighbouring states. The Muslim States of Bijapur, Golkonda, Ahmednagar and Bidar formed a coalition; the long-standing hostility ended in a combined attack on Vijayanagar and on the 23rd January, A.D. 1665, the battle of Talikotta was fought near the villages of Raksas and Tagdi. It resulted in the defeat of the Vijayanagar armies. Hussain Nizam Shah killed Rama Raya and the invading army enriched itself fabulously by plunder. The highly developed and magnificent city of Vijayanagar was systematically sacked and totally destroyed by the invading army. From the third day after the battle up to the next five months the destruction was carried out relentlessly and completely. ''Never perhaps in the history of the world had such havoc been wrought and wrought so suddenly, on so splendid a city; teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plentitude of prosperity one day, and on the next day seized, pillaged, and reduced to ruins.'' (Sewell).

The Vijayanagar Empire continued to exist till about the early part of the seventeenth century and thereafter it was weakened and dismembered by the dissatisfaction and rebellion of its own viceroys.

Nicolo Conti, an Italian, visited Vijayanagar in A.D. 1420. Abdur Razzak, a Persian Ambassador came in about A.D. 1440. Domingo Paes, the Portuguese traveller, visited it in A.D. 1520. Fernao Nuniz wrote his chronicles in about A.D. 1535. Federici visited it in about A.D. 1567 after the city was sacked.

Krishna Deva Raya built the Ranga-Mandapa and the eastern gateway of the Pampapati temple and did his best to beautify his capital. He also built the Krishna and Hazara Rama temples, the great monolithic statue of Narasimha and started the construction of the famous temple of Vitthal. He built the town of Hospet in honour of his courtesan, Nagala Devi.

Hampi, the birth-place of the Vijayanagar Empire and its capital, is now described as a "vast open air museum of Hindu monuments in the Dravidian style of architecture." Before the rise of this empire, Lord Virupaksha stood here in solitude and isolation. Even today, Virupaksha stands in the same solitude and isolation in the ruins of one of the most magnificent cities covering an area of some nine square miles. Hampi dominated South India from A.D. 1336 to A.D. 1565 and even thereafter the Vijayanagar Rulers ruled over part of South India from elsewhere. The 600th anniversary of the founding of Vijayanagar was celebrated in A.D. 1936.

Kamalapur is 7 miles from Hospet. Proceeding from this place towards Hampi, one comes across the Ladies' Bath forming part of the palace. To the north of it is the Simhasana with the carvings of elephants, dancing-girls and Ramayana scenes. North of it is the Hazara Rama temple and further north is the Zenana enclosure. To the east of it are the Elephant Stables. Further north towards Hampi is the gigantic statue of Narasimha in granite with a canopy of Sesha Naga. To the north-east is the Krishna Swamy temple. North of it are the Ganesh temple and the Hemakuta Hill. There are a group of Jain temples. Then comes the great Pampapati temple of Hampi. The Eastern Gopuram has eleven floors and is known as Gali Gopuram as it reaches the air of Vayumandala. On the bank of the river in the north-east direction one first comes to the Rama Swamy temple and then to the Vijaya Vitthala Swamy temple.

About half a mile to the east from the main entrance of the Virupaksha temple, there is the great monolithic bull. This way also leads to the Matanga Parvatam. On the full moon of Chaitra there is a festival and Lord Siva is taken out in a procession.

About half a mile to the north-east from Virupaksha temple are the Rishyamuka Parvata and the Chakra-tirth; Tungabhadra flows on three sides of this hill. To the north of it is Sita Sarovara, also a small cave where legend says that Sita threw her ornaments when she was being forcibly taken away by Ravana.

About four miles to the east of Virupaksha is the Malya Vana Parvata. It is considered to be identical with the Prasravana Giri where Sri Rama stayed with Lakshmana for four months after his alliance with Sugriva. But according to Bhavabhuti, Malyavana and Prasravana are different hills. Malyavana is also called Sphatikasila. According to Pargiter, Prasravana is the chain of hills and Malyavana is the peak.

Ancient Kishkindha is identical with Anegundi on the northern bank of river Tungabhadra. It is about three miles from Vijayanagar. About two miles to the south-west of Kishkindha is the Pampa Sarovara. A little to the north-west is the Anjani Hill which is the birth-place of Hanuman. About 60 miles from Kishkindha is the birth place of Sabari.

Sugriva was considered a son of Surya and he was the younger brother of Vali. The two brothers were once friendly but after some time they fell out, Vali capturing Sugriva's wife Tara and driving him out. Sugriva then stayed on the Rishyamuka Hill. He one day saw Rama and Lakshmana coming towards him. He sent Hanuman to know their mind. Lakshmana told Hanuman that they were out in search of Sita and were advised to secure the help of Sugriva. Rama and Lakshmana were then taken to Sugriva and in the presence of the luminous flaming fire, the friendship of Rama and Lakshmana with Sugriva was avowed and proclaimed. Sugriva showed the ornaments thrown by Sita and requested Rama to help him against Vali. Rama obliged his friend Sugriva by killing Vali and established Sugriva on the throne of Kishkindha. Sugriva was thereafter sunk in new pleasures and Rama stayed at the Prasravana Hill for four months. Lakshmana had to remind Sugriva of his promise to help Rama in finding Sita. Sabari was staying near the Pampa Sarovara and rendering service to Matanga and other sages.

The various localities mentioned in the *Ramayana* are identified with the spots near about Hampi. Pampa Sarovara, Rishyamuka Hill, Matanga Parvata, Malyavana Parvata, the cave where Sugriva kept Sita's jewels are some of these localities. Near Nimbapuram is shown the cremated remains of Vali. The various boulders of stone near about this place are stated to be remnants of the huge stones collected by Hanuman for the great Setubandha. Rama met Hanuman for the first time at Rishyamukha.

Virupaksha is classed with the celebrated Tirthas after a visit to which one must have a shave and a fast.

If one returns home without that, his sins are said to accompany him back to his residence.

अयोध्या दण्डकारण्यं **विरूपाक्षं** च वेङ्कटम् ।
मुण्डनं चोपवासश्च क्षेत्रेष्वेषु प्रकीर्तितम् ॥
लोभान्मोहादकृत्वा यः स्वगृहं प्रतियाति यः ।
सहैव यान्ति तद्गेहे पातकानि च तेन वै ॥

—*Skanda, Brahma, Setumahatmya,* Ch. 52, Verses 102 to 104.

37. KONARAK

लवणस्योदधेस्तीरे पवित्रे सुमनोहरे ।
सर्वत्र वालुकाकीर्णे देशे सर्वगुणान्विते ॥
आस्ते यत्र स्वयं देवः सहस्रांशुदिवाकरः ।
कोणादित्य इति ख्यातो भुक्तिमुक्तिफलप्रदः ॥

—*Brahma Purana*, Ch. 28, Verses 9 and 18.

"On the sacred and pleasant sea shore covered with sand in the nice country (of Orissa) stays the Sun God of thousand rays known as Konaditya (Konarak), the giver of enjoyment and liberation."

Konarak (konarka) or Konaditya is one of the four principal kshetras of Orissa. It is situated 19° 53′ N. and 86° 6′ E. and is 21 miles north-east of Jagannath Puri. It is called Kona (Corner) Arka (Sun) as it is situated on the north-eastern corner of Puri or the Chakra-kshetra. Konarak is also called the Arka-kshetra or the Padma-kshetra (as the Sun-God was visualised as seated on a lotus). By the side of it there is the dried up river Chandrabhaga, a branch of the Prachi river. Here there is the celebrated and magnificent temple of the Sun-God built in 1278 A.D. and though in ruins it still maintains its majesty and stands as one of the grandest temples of the world. This colossal structure in the Puri district is on the seashore. It was called the Black Pagoda by the mariners. It was dug out of sand in A.D. 1893 when its great architectural beauty became widely known and appreciated. The Jagmohan of this temple was intact but the Sikhara of the Garba-griha was missing. There has been a large-scale programme of repairs in connection with this temple and the work is in progress.

Kapila Samhita which deals exhaustively with these four kshetras states that Konarak is situated in the Maitreya Vana. The legend in this connection states that Samba, the son of Krishna by Jambavati, once had a quarrel with Sage Narada, on account of a foolish prank played by Samba on Narada. The latter got annoyed and led Samba to a place where Krishna's wives were bathing. Samba was noted for his personal charms. On coming to know of Samba's indecent entry into the ladies' bath, Krishna cursed him to be a leper as Samba was very proud of his handsome appearance. Samba then pleaded innocence and the curse was modified in this way, that Samba should go to the Maitreya Vana and propitiate the Sun-God for a cure for leprosy. The Sun-God was accordingly propitiated by Samba. The Sun-God was visualised; Samba was asked to repeat 21 names of the Sun and bathe in Chandrabhaga river. On doing so, Samba found in the waters of the river an image of the Sun-God seated on a lotus. It was then installed at this place and a temple was constructed there. On worshipping it, Samba was cured of his leprosy, and returned to Dwaraka.

The Madla Panji, as quoted by Dr. Rajendralal Mitra in his *Antiquities of Orissa,* says that King Narasimha who had a tail, constructed in the Saka year 1200 or 1278 A.D. the temple of the Sun-God. This date is corroborated by the copper-plate inscription of the Ganga kings stating that King Narasimha Deva constructed the Konarak temple in the 18th year of his reign.

Even now there is the faith that if a leper with single-minded devotion worships the Sun-God, he is cured of his disease. The healing capacity of the Sun-God in this connection, particularly for curing heart-disease, leprosy, etc., has been noted since the time of *Rig Veda*

(1-50-11 and 12). These Riks are known as the Rogaghna Upanishad and are said to have the efficacy of removing diseases and the evil effects of all kinds of poisons.

In about 1580, Abul Fazl, the Minister of Akbar, speaks about this Konarak temple in his *Aini-i-Akbari* as follows: "Near to Jagannath is the temple of the Sun, in the erection of which was expended the whole revenue of Orissa for 12 years." The annual revenue of Orissa was then 3 crores of rupees, and according to Abul Fazl, Rs. 36 crores was spent on the construction of this Konarak temple. He believed that the temple was built "730 years ago" *i.e.* in about 850 A.D. He adds that there were 28 other temples near this pagoda.

It has been suggested that this temple was not completed according to plan as the foundation was likely to have given way on account of the heavy dome before it was completely finished. As the temple was situated near the sea-shore, it was visible to the mariners who guided their ships by it. Either because of certain inaccuracies in the bearings or neglect of navigators, many ships got wrecked at this place. The local people say that there was a huge magnetic stone on the top of the Sikhara of this temple and it drew towards it the unfortunate ships. This reminds us of the story of Sinbad where ships were drawn towards a rock. It is said that the Muslim crew of some ship removed the magnet from this temple. Thereafter the priests took the image of the Sun-God to Puri. Abul Fazl referred to the exquisite Sun Pillar at Konarak which is now removed to Puri.

It is stated that Kalapahar attacked the Konarak temple in the 16th century and that as he could not destroy it, he only removed the Copper Kalasa and damaged the temple.

The sculptures of Konarak are exquisitely cut. The various figures of men, animals, foliage and intricate patterns are executed with "a degree of taste, propriety and freedom which would stand a comparison with some of our best specimens of Gothic architectural ornaments. The workmanship, too, remains as perfect as if it had just come from the chisel of the sculptor, owing to the extreme hardness and durability of the stone" (Stirling). The Navagrahas are very finely sculptured. "Huge elephants crouch in terror under rampant lions, while mutilated human figures lie crushed beneath the flat pulpy feet of the elephants. Clubmen, griffins, warriors on prancing horses, colossal figures of grotesque and varied shape, stand about in silent stony groups. The elephants have the flabby under-lips of nature, and exhibit a uniformity in all the essential points of their anatomy, with a variety of postures and details, which Hindu art has long forgotten" (Hunter). The diameter of the wheels of the Ratha is 9 feet 8 inches; the width of the rim is 8 inches. Each wheel has a set of 8 thick spokes. There are 24 such wheels. They are most elaborately carved on all sides with medallions and animal figures. The Hindu artists have worked upon nature. Some of the sculptures are in lascivious attitude.

Surya or the Sun-God is a Vedic deity. He is "the brilliant face of the Gods, the eye of Mitra, Varuna and Agni." His disc is visible to all in the sky. He is implored to remove sins. He is one of the witnesses who observes the sins of everyone. In the Sandhya Vandana, Surya, along with Manyu and Manyupati, is adored for removal of sins. Arghyas are daily offered to him; upasthana and the famous Gayatri mantras are repeated daily in his adoration. Gayatri is supreme among Vedic mantras. He is the giver of riches and fame. King Yudhishthira, when he was in the forest, propitiated the Sun-God and obtained from him the vessel for securing an inexhaustible quantity of food. He faced one thousand Sun-worshipping Brahmins who had eight thousand followers. Surya is called the Atma of the moving and the immoveable. Poet Mayura who lived in the court of King Harsha in the 7th century was suffering from leprosy and he composed the famous Surya Sataka or 100 verses to get cured of that disease.

Apart from the general worship of the Sun-God since the time of the Vedas, there was also a class of Sauras or people worshipping the Sun-God exclusively. Anandgiri says that Sankara argued against their chief who was called Diwakara and adds that there were six classes of these Sauras.

Varahamihira, the great astronomer and astrologer of 550 A.D., states in his *Brihat Samhita* 60-19 that the installation and other ceremonies connected with the temples of the Sun-God should be traced to the Magas who were the special priests of the Sun-God. It is said there was one Brahmin of the Mihira Gotra, called Sujihva. The Sun-God fell in love with his daughter, Nikshubha, and a son called Jarasastra was born to them. The Magas are descendants of this Jarasastra who is identified with the Avesta prophet Zarathushtra. These Magas put on a girdle round their waist which was called Avyanga and are stated to be residing in Saka-dwipa. Samba, the son of Krishna, who established the Sun-temple, is said to have gone to Saka-dwipa and brought some of these Maga priests to carry on the worship in the Sun temple. Scholars opine that these Magas are the Magis of ancient Persia and the Avyanga is the Kasti or the Aivyaonghen of Avesta. The connection of these Magas with India is very ancient. Varahamihira mentions the features of the image of the Sun-God in his *Brihat Samhita*, Ch. 58. The feet of the Sun-God are covered up to the knees, he is dressed in the northern fashion and Avyanga is placed around his waist. The images of the Sun-God found in temples have heavy boots reaching up to the knees and the girdle on the waist has one end hanging downwards in the fashion of the Persians. It is believed that the indigenous worship of the Sun-God was later mixed up with the new cult of these Maga priests who were gradually Hinduised and the temples of the Sun-God show some traits of foreign influence.

Numerous Sun temples existed in North India. The story of Samba is also told in connection with the Sun-temple at Multan. The Martanda temple in Kashmir, the Modhera temple in Gujarat, the temple at Gwalior and many other temples were dedicated to the Sun-God. Modhera temple in ruins is 18 miles from Patan in Gujarat and was constructed in 1027 A.D.

Portions of *Mahabharata, Ramayana, Markandeya, Vishnu, Bhavishya, Brahma, Agni* and *Garuda Puranas* as also the *Saura Samhita* represent the Saura literature. Several chapters of *Brahma Purana* are devoted to the Konarak temple of the Sun-God. The Mandasor inscription of 473 A.D., the *Surya Sataka* of Mayura of the 7th century, and the *Samba Upapurana* are in praise of the Sun-God. Aditya Hridaya is part of *Ramayana* (6-106).

Surya or the Sun-God is one of the five Panchayatana deities and his image is made either of the Suryakanta jewel, *i.e.* the Sun-Stone or the Sphatika Stone, *i.e.* crystal. It is round in shape.

The Saura Brahmins of the Saka-dwipa, according to the *Bhavishya Purana,* were Magas who were subdivided into 3 classes known as Magas, Somakas and Bhojakas. It is surmised by some that the name Magadha is derived from these Maga Brahmins. From the inscriptions of the Maga poet Gangadhara of the Bharadwaja clan it is known that in the 12th century the Angirasa Bharadwajas were held in great respect in the Magadha court. The priests of the Konarak temple were Angirasa Brahmins whose manners resembled those of the Magas. Their code of rituals is known as Angirasa Kalpa. Atharvans and Atharva-Angirasas secured merit by worshipping the Sun-God.

अथर्वाथर्वाङ्गिरसो निखिलं यच्छते रविः ।

—*Bhavishya, Brahma* 106, Verse 10.

A detailed description of the image of Sun-God is given in the *Visva Karma Silpa* and *Bhavishya Purana.*

Brahma Purana, Ch. 28.1, states that one should worship the Sun-God at Konarak particularly on the 7th of the bright half of the month of Magha. With self-control and the observance of a fast one should bathe and contemplate on the Sun-God.

एवं ददाति यश्चार्घ्यं सप्तम्यां सुसमाहितः ।
आदित्याय शुचिः स्नातः स लभेदीप्सितं फलम् ॥

"One offering an Arghya to Sun-God on this Magha Sukla saptami with a bath is purified and so gets the fulfilment of his desires."

In the month of Chaitra as also on the Makara Sankranti, other Sankrantis, the Vishuva days and the Sundays, the worship of the Sun-God at Konarak has been held to be specially meritorious.

It is said that the Sun-God was first visualised here by Samba on the 7th of the bright half of Magha and therefore that date is specially noted for the Yatra of Konarak. There are 12 names of the Sun when in the 12 signs of the Zodiac—Amsu, Bhaga, Mitra, etc. Similarly it is recommended that one should have 12 Namaskaras to Surya.

Varahamihira was a great devotee of the Sun-God and his first verse of the famous Brihajjataka is a prayer to the Sun-God to grant the power of speech.

वाचं नः स ददात्वनेककिरणस्त्रैलोक्यदीपो रविः ।

Poet Mayura concludes his Surya Sataka by saying that these 100 verses are composed with devotion for the benefit of humanity and he who repeats them even once is freed from sins and secures health, poetic ability, intellect, strength, lustre, longevity, learning, powers, wealth and sons through the grace of the Sun-God.

श्लोका लोकस्य भूत्यै शतमिति रचिताः श्रीमयूरेण भक्त्या
युक्तश्चैतान् पठेद् यः सकृदपि पुरुषः सर्वपापैर्विमुक्तः ।
आरोग्यं सत्कवित्वं मतिमतुलबलं कान्तिमायुःप्रकर्षं
विद्यामैश्वर्यमर्थं सुतमपि लभते सोऽत्र सूर्यप्रसादात् ॥

38. GIRNAR

वस्त्रापथे देववरो भवः स्थितो दामोदरो रैवतके व्यवस्थितः ।
अम्बेति देवी गिरिमूर्ध्नि संस्थिता देवाश्च सर्वे परितः प्रतिष्ठिताः ॥
क्षेत्राधिपास्तीर्थवरस्य रक्षका देवेन मुक्ता भवसंनिधानतः ।
पश्यन्ति ये देववरं भवाभिधं मुच्यन्ति ते यान्ति दिवं नरा भुवः ॥

Skanda, Prabhas, Vastrapatha, Ch. 9, 229-230.

"At the Vastrapatha tirtha abides the Lord of Gods Siva as Bhavanath; on Raivataka hill stands Vishnu as Damodara. On the top of the Girnar abides the Goddess as Amba. All deities in the vicinity stay there. The Kshetrapalas are placed by gods near Bhavanath to guard this tirtha. Those who have the darshana of Bhavanath go to Heaven."

The sacred hill of Girnar with Brahminical and Jain temples, Buddhist caves and numerous ancient sites is situated in Saurashtra in 21°31′ N. and 70°42′ E., about 10 miles east of the modern city of Junagadh. This hill is about 3,500 feet above sea level and even though puranas mention more than 21 peaks, 5 of them are considered at present the principal ones. They are the Amba Mata, Goraknath, Oghad Shikara, Guru Dattatreya and Kalika's peak. Amba Mata is the Girnari goddess. The Gorakhnath peak is the highest, being 3,666 feet above sea level. The peak of Kalika Devi is supposed to be the resort of *aghoris.* The hill has a luxuriant and dense jungle around it and after the vegetation terminates, the hill stands as a barren isolated black rock. The most elevated peak is that of Gorakhnath, having a very small area on the summit, with a temple dedicated to

Gorakhnath. The other peaks also have shrines dedicated to other deities. There is a small table-land or platform on the side of the mountain about 600 feet below the summit, on which is situated the old palace of Ra Khengar. By its side there are numerous Jain temples. This fortress and the old remnants of the palace of the Chudasamas still exist. Mount Girnar is a sacred place of pilgrimage of Jains also. The 22nd Jain Tirthankara, Neminath, has a special temple dedicated to him. There are numerous other Jain temples also on this hill.

There are three kundas on this hill *viz.* Gaumukhi, Hanumandhara and Kamandal kund. On the extreme point of the northern side is a steep rock called Bhairavajap from which ascetics and others who wanted to commit religious suicide used to leap to their death. At the foot of the Girnar hill is Vamanasthali or Vanthali and Balisthana or Bilka.

Mt. Girnar has been called by various names. It is called Punyagiri and Ujjayanti in the Vanaparva of *Mahabharata* (Vana 86-20). It is also called Pushpagiri, Raivataka, Vaijayanta and Vastrapatha Kshetra. In *Mahabharata* it is stated that when Arjuna carried Subhadra away, he was near Mt. Raivataka and the summit of Ujjayanti and he crossed Aanarta and went to Indraprastha. There is difference among the scholars as to whether Girnar or Ujjayanti is the same as the Raivataka hill or whether they are two different hills. The latter is considered by some to be a separate hill, near to the east of Dwaraka. When Subhadra went to worship the Raivataka hill, she was carried away by Arjuna. It is described as being at the door-step of Dwaraka. Shri Durgashankar Shastri takes Girnar and Raivataka to be one and the same and thinks that Dwaraka was established by the Yadavas near that very place. He opines that in the days of *Mahabharata* Kushasthali was at the bottom of the Raivataka hill and at that very place *i.e.* at the base of Girnar, the Yadavas established Dwaravati or Dwaraka.

The Prabhasa Khanda of *Skandapurana* in its subkhanda known as the Vastrapatha Mahatmya describes in 19 chapters the sacred places round about Girnar. Vastrapatha is not only the hill of Girnar and Raivataka but also the area surrounding the hillside. It is called Vastrapatha because it is supposed to cover the area occupied by the fallen cloth of Lord Siva. Its extent is described: To the north is the river Bhadra; on the eastern side this kshetra extends over 2 yojanas; on the southern side it is up to the river Balisthana and the Ujjayanti hill; on the west this Vastrapatha Tirtha extends up to the confluence of rivers near Vamanapura (Vanthali). From the north-east of Vamana Nagar flows the river Suvarna Rekha (Sonarekh).

The base of Girnar and a fortress on it were considered very important from the military point of view. The surrounding area is very fertile, and it appears that since the time of Nandas and the Mauryas at least, Junagadh or Girinagar has been a flourishing town. It is stated that in ancient times this town was called Manipur, thereafter it was called Chandraketupur, afterwards Raivatanagar and then Puratanapur.

To reach Girnar from Junagadh one goes via the Vageshwari Gate. Within that gate is the Ramjharokha for the pilgrims to take rest. Nearby is the Vageshwari talao. There is the temple of Vageshwari Mata, on the hill known as Vageshwari hill. Then comes the Damodhar kunda. The water of this kunda is considered very sacred, and it is said it has the capacity of dissolving bones. Close to that is the Revati Kunda named after the daughter of

Revata and the wife of Balarama. It is stated that Revata left Dwaraka after Revati's marriage, and took up residence near Girnar, and the hill near Damodar Kunda, where he resided thereafter, was known as Revatachala. Near the Damodara kunda there is the cremation ground of the Hindus. The whole area from the Vageshwari gate onwards up to Girnar is included in the Vastrapatha kshetra. Between the Vageshwari Gate and the Damodara Kunda one comes across a boulder of rock on which there are inscriptions of Asoka, Rudra Daman and Skanda Gupta.

This place is one mile east of Junagadh and four miles west of the base of Girnar. The edicts of the Mauryan Emperor Priyadarsi Asoka are inscribed on the rock. They are fourteen in number and their lengths vary from 4 to 15 lines, each of about 25 letters.

The general purpose of these edicts is ethical and not administrative. They are addressed to his subjects, people of the adjoining countries and also to posterity; and they declare the Emperor's policy of peace and amity by way of perpetual guidance. They are sermons in stone. Without giving much introduction about himself, the Emperor in his own straightforward and simple language gives instructions on Dharma. The rock edicts embodying the Emperor's aims and ideals are mostly available on the frontiers of the Empire and they are found at Shabaz Garhi near Peshawar, Yerragudi in the Kurnool District, Girnar in Saurashtra and Dhauli and Jaugada in Orissa. They do not glorify the Emperor, but appeal to his contemporaries and posterity to follow the great moral truths and ideals which are common to Brahminism and Buddhism. They say that no animal shall be killed or sacrificed. Medicinal herbs, roots and fruits shall be imported and grown. Officers of the Emperor shall tour, once in five years, to proclaim these instructions. Obedience to father and mother, generosity to friends, acquaintances, relations, Brahmans and Shramanas, abstention from the slaughter of animals and minimising expenditure and possessions—these are meritorious. In place of the sound of war drums, there are now heard in the Emperor's realm, sounds of the proclamation of Dharma and war implements are shown to the people only as exhibitions. Dharma is not possible for one whose conduct is not good. The Emperor says that he must work for the welfare of all people. That welfare is rooted in wakefulness and in due despatch of business. One has to discharge one's debt to all beings so that some at least may be happy here and also attain Heaven. The Emperor also inaugurated Dharma Yatras and *Dharma Mangala* (the ceremony of piety). Persons of other religions should be suitably honoured, for, by acting in that manner only one exalts one's own religion. *Devanam Priya* Asoka does not value gifts in offering as much as he values the spiritual strength of the followers of religion. To him *Dharma Vijaya* is the most important conquest. The edicts refer to the tribes living on the borders and makes reference to the country of Anti-Yoka, the Yavana King, living 800 yojanas away; and four other kings living beyond the territory of Anti Yoka, *viz.* Turayama (Ptolemy II of Egypt 285 to 247 B.C.), Anti Kona (Antigonus Gonatus of Macedonia 276-239 B.C.), Maga (Magas of Cyrene—300 to 250 B.C.) and Alika Sundara (Alexander of Epirus or Corinth).

From the edicts of Asoka it appears that this place and the town of Junagadh were famous during Mauryan times. On this very stone containing edicts of Asoka there is the inscription of the 2nd century A.D. of Kshatrapa Rudradaman. It records the repairing of the Sudarshan-talao, which was originally built by some unknown king, repaired by Asoka and subsequently further repaired by Rudradaman and Skanda Gupta. The Gupta Emperor through his Viceroy, Chakra Palita, again repaired this talao in A.D. 455-56.

Scholars believe that this Sudarshana lake started from the Aswatthama hill, went up to the walls of Uperkot, and was bounded by river Suvarna Rekha or Sonarekh and river Palasini. The area of this lake was considered to be 268 acres. Dr. Bhagwanlal Indraji believes that the image of God Vishnu in the Damodarji temple belongs to the Gupta period and perhaps it might be the image originally established by Chakra Palita. This stone, therefore, contains historic inscriptions beginning from the 3rd Century B.C. to the 5th Century A.D. .

After the Kshatrapas came the Valabhis who ruled for 300 years. They were succeeded by the Chudasama dynasty which ruled from the 9th Century to 1472 A.D. . Griharipu is stated to have constructed the fortress of Uperkot near Junagadh. In Uperkot there are old cannons, the Adichadiwav and the well of Navaghan. There are also some underground Buddhist caves in Uperkot.

The hill to the north of Damodar Kunda is called Aswatthama hill and it is stated that Aswatthama of the Mahabharat fame is still seen wandering by some faithful people. Near this hill is the temple of Damodarji, said to have been constructed by Vajranabha, son of Sri Krishna.

Further up towards Girnar, about a mile and a half from Damodara Kunda, is the temple of Bhavanath Mahadeo, on the bank of Suvarna Rekha. A fair is held here on the 12th, 13th and 14th of the dark half of the month of Magha. The Mrigi Kund is situated nearby. The Skandapurana describes the *Mahatmya* of Bhavanath and Mrigi Kund in detail.

At a height of about 3,000 feet is the gate of the fortress. Most of the temples in the fort are of the Jainas. It is believed that Dandanayak Sajjan Mehta of Siddharaj Jaisingh spent the income of Saurashtra for three years in constructing the stone temple of Neminath, who is the 22nd Tirthankara. These Jain temples exhibit the architecture and sculpture of the Chalukya age of Gujarat. Jain temples at Abu are superior in point of art to those at Girnar.

The temple of Ambaji is on the first peak of the hill and appears to be the oldest Hindu temple so far on Girnar. It is considered at least as old as the 12th Century A.D., if not earlier. Newly married couples go there to offer their obeisance to the Goddess. The bride and the bridegroom tie their clothes together and in the company of the relations offer prayers to the Goddess with presents of cocoanuts.

On the Gorakhnath peak is the temple dedicated to Gorakhnath, who is believed to be the founder of the sect of Kanphata Jogis with their headquarters at Gorakhmadhi. Gorakhnath is said to be the pupil of Matsyendranath. It is said that Sadvritti, the wife of a brahmin Sadbodha, had no child. Matsyendranath gave her the prasad of ashes. She threw it away on a hillock. After twelve years Matsyendranath inquired about the boy. He found out that the ashes were thrown away on the hillock. He went there and shouted 'alakh'. Out came the voice of Gorakhnath, saying 'adesh'. As he was directly born from the earth, Gorakhnath is known as Ayoni Sambhava (not born out of the womb of a woman). He saved his teacher Matsyendranath from the love fetters of a queen. Gorakhnath is believed to have been a great Yogi, a worshipper of Siva, a monist and possessed of great siddhis. His mutts are found in many places in Nepal, the Punjab, Saurashtra, Maharashtra, Bengal and Ceylon.

Girnar or Girinagar is mentioned in *Brihat Samhita* 14-11. It is famous for the Asrama of Rishi Dattatreya.

Arishtanemi, or Neminath is specially worshipped by the Digambara sect. He was born at Sauriyapura or Mathura and is believed to be a contemporary and cousin of Sri Krishna, being the son of Rajimati, the daughter of Ugrasena. He died at Girnar at a very old age and his symbol is the Sankha.

The whole of the fourth Sarga of Magh's Sisupalavadha is a description of the Raivataka mount.

निःश्वासधूमं सह रन्तभाभिर्भित्त्वोत्थितं भूमिमिवोरगाणाम् ।
नीलोपलस्यूतविचित्रधातुमसौ गिरिं रैवतकं ददर्श ॥

—*Sisupalavadha* 4-1.

"He saw the Raivataka mount on which the variegated colour of the red chalk and other clay was mixed with that of the sapphire. This appeared like the red furious heaving of serpents coming out after piercing the ground and mixed with the rays of jewels on their heads."

39. KUMBHAKONAM

कुम्भकोणं सेतुमूलं गोकर्णं नैमिषं तथा ।
अयोध्या दण्डकारण्यं विरूपाक्षं च वेंकटम् ॥
शालिग्रामं प्रयागं च कांची द्वारावती तथा ।
मधुरा पद्मनाभं च काशी विश्वेश्वरालया ॥
नद्य: सर्वा: समुद्राश्च पर्वतं भास्करं स्मृतम् ।
मुण्डनं चोपवासश्च क्षेत्रेष्वेषु प्रकीर्तितम् ॥
लोभान्मोहादकृत्वा य: स्वगृहं याति मानव: ।
सहैव यान्ति तद्गेहे पातकानि च तेन वै ॥

—*Skanda, Setumahatmya Brahma Khanda,*
Ch. 52, Verses 102-105.

"At the following places one should have a shaving of the head and a fast. If through greed or ignorance one returns home without a shave and a fast, all his sins are said to return with him to his house instead of being destroyed at those Tirthas. These sacred places are KUMBHAKONAM, Ramesvaram, Gokarna (30 miles south of Goa), Naimisha (Nimsar, 45 miles from Lucknow), Ayodhya, Dandaka forest (starting from Bhopal and extending upto river Godavari), Virupaksha (at Hampi), Venkata (Tirupati), Saligrama (at the source of river Gandaki on the Himalaya), Prayaga, Kanchi (Conjeevaram), Dwaraka, Madhura (both Mathura in the North and Madura in the South), Padmanabha (at Trivandrum), Kashi, the abode of Lord Viswanath, all the rivers, oceans and the Bhaskara-kshetra i.e. Konarak."

The town of Kumbhakonam is one of the oldest in South India, and it is sacred on account of its numerous ancient temples and the Mahamagham Tank. It is the headquarters of the Kumbhakonam taluk in the Tanjore district, and situated 10° 58′ N. and 79° 32′ E. on the bank of river Cauveri. It is 194 miles from Madras. It is identified with Malaikurram and stated to be the capital of the Chola Kings in about 7th Century A.D..

This town contains numerous ancient temples. There are twelve chief temples of Siva, four chief temples of Vishnu, and there is also one temple of Brahma. Temples of Brahma are very rare in India, and it is interesting to find one at Kumbhakonam.

The Sarangapani Vishnu temple is very richly ornamented. Its *gopuram* is 147 ft. high, being an imposing structure of 12 storeys. The ceiling is well painted. There are numerous ornamental figures. The temple has two large festival-chariots of wood which are elaborately carved. It is said that the larger of these two chariots is the third biggest in the district. It is said that the Sarangapani temple was built by the Nayak Rajahs.

The Ramaswami temple has interesting frescoes depicting scenes from the *Ramayana*. The Navaratri festival is celebrated with great éclat in this temple.

The Saiva temples at Kumbhakonam are older still, and some of them existed during the time of Chola Kings. The temple of Kumbheswara is the most sacred of them all.

In this connection, Sri Sekkizhar notes the following legend in the *Periyapurana*: Lord Brahma became extremely anxious at the time of the *pralaya,* or the destruction of the Universe. He thought that if everything including even the seed was destroyed, how would he be in a position to recreate the Universe subsequently. On his being so confounded, he approached Lord Siva, who advised him about the way of protecting the seed. Brahma was advised to mix earth with *Amrita* and water and to prepare a pot out of it. It was decorated with thread; a cocoanut was placed over it with mango-leaves and *kusa* grass. This *kumbha* was placed hanging in a net on the Meru mountain and was worshipped with *bilva* leaves. At the time of the *pralaya*, or destruction, this *kumbha* was carried away by the swift current of water at the time of world inundation. When the tides subsided, this *kumbha* stopped near Kumbhakonam in the South. The mango leaves and the cocoanut on the top of this *kumbha* fell at different places, which became sacred *tirthas*. Lord Siva then took the form of a hunter or *kirata*, aimed an arrow at the *kumbha* and broke it.

The *Amrita* in the pot spread out on the ground extending up to 5 *kroshas* or ten miles. This *Amrita* stagnated at two places, one of which became the *Mahamagha tirtha*, and the other became the *Pottamaraikulam* (a tank of golden lotuses). From the drops and spray of *Amrita* there arose innumerable *tirthas*. Out of the pieces of the broken pot of *kumbha*, Lord Siva made a Siva Linga, and it is said that this is the very Siva Linga of the famous Kumbheswara temple. Within an area of 10 miles from Kumbheswara there are about 18 other *tirthas*. As stated by Lord Siva to Brahma, Kumbhakonam is sacred as the *kumbha* or the pot filled with nectar stopped at this place.

The Kumbheswara temple has a very nice *gopuram* 128 ft. high. The Nageswara temple is constructed in such a way that the rays of the sun enter into the sanctum through the openings in the *gopuram* three times in a year and the rays fall right on the idol, and this is held as the worship of the deity by the Sun.

The Chakrapani temple of Vishnu is near the burning ground, and the burning ground is called Chakrapani-thurai.

The sacred Mahamagham Tank at Kumbhakonam is a fine reservoir of water, surrounded by picturesque *mandapas*. This Mahamagha tirtha is also called *Kanya Tirtha*. There is a belief that it contains a number of other *tirthas* in the form of wells. Sri Appar, in his prayers, refers to the Godavari *tirtha* in this tank. Every year, in the month of Magha, a festival is held here and the image of Lord Kumbheswara is taken out for *avabhritha utsava*, or the sacred bath, and on that occasion numerous devotees have ablutions in the tank. The great Mahamagham festival, in honour of Sri Kumbheswaraswami, takes place every thirteenth year, when lakhs of devotees from all over Bharat assemble for holy bath in the Mahamagham tank. This is one of the great festivals of South India. This festival is also known as Mamangam.

The exact time when this festival takes place is the conjunction of the Moon with the Magha Nakshatra and Jupiter on the Full Moon day of the month of Magha. Jupiter crosses one Rasi or sign after about a year. It comes to Simha or Leo every thirteenth year. Magha or Regulus is situated in Leo. The particular date on which the moon in the month of Magha is conjoined with Magha and Jupiter is considered specially sacred. This usually happens on the full moon day of the month of Magha. It is believed that on this auspicious occasion this tank receives supplies of water from the Ganges and eight other holy rivers. On this occasion a great fair is held there. Those who take their bath at the sacred hour are said to wash off their sins and acquire merit. All the deities are said to be present here on that occasion. There are sixteen picturesque mandapas on the banks of this tank, which are decorated for the occasion and they present a grand sight.

The Ramaswami temple contains very attractive sculptures. It was supported by the Naik Rulers. It is said that King Raghunath Naik of Tanjore in the 16th Century secured from the Darasuram tank idols of Rama and Sita. He installed them in this temple.

Kumbhakonam is a stronghold of brahminism and brahminical culture. It has been the intellectual centre of Tamil Nad. There is here the Mutt of Sankaracharya of Sri Kanchi. The headquarters of the Kanchi Kamakotipeetha were shifted from Kanchi to Kumbhakonam in 1743 A.D. during the reign of a Tanjore King and they remained here for more than a hundred years. The Tanjore Ruler desired that the saintly head of the Kanchi Peetha should reside in his dominion. The Mutt has a very valuable library of Sanskrit manuscripts.

There is also a Mutt erected in honour of a recently deceased saint, named *Mauna Paradeshi*, who never spoke.

The Nageswara temple contains a separate shrine of the Sun also. In the Chakrapani temple Vishnu appeared in the form of *Chakra* or the discus to subdue the arrogance of Surya who subsequently worshipped Nageswara.

The Mahamgham tank covers an area of 20 acres and on the occasion of this pilgrimage most of it is emptied.

Bath in the month of Magha known as Magha-snana is considered to be auspicious every year. It is stated:

ब्रह्मचारी गृहस्थो वा वानप्रस्थोऽथ भिक्षुकः ।
बालवृद्धयुवानश्च नरनारीनपुंसकाः ।
स्नात्वा माघे शुभे तीर्थे प्राप्नुवन्तीप्सितं फलम् ॥

—*Bhavishya*, quoted in *Nirnaya Sindhu*.

"*Whether one is a brahmachari, or a householder or a vanaprastha, or one moving with a begging bowl, whether he is a child, or an old man or a young man or a male or a female or an impotent person, whoever takes his bath at* *any sacred tirtha in the month of Magha secures the desired object.''*

संप्राप्ते माघमासे तु तपस्विजनवल्लभे ।
क्रोशन्ति सर्ववारीणि समुद्गच्छति भास्करे ।
पुनीमः सर्वपापानि त्रिविधानि न संशयः ॥

—*Naradiya* quoted by *Nirnaya Sindhu.*

''*In the month of Magha, which is dear to holy men, the sacred waters cry out as soon as the Sun rises that we shall doubtless destroy all sins.*''

If a person is not able to take his bath for a whole month, it is recommended that he should take his bath for three days. Regarding these three dates, there is a difference of opinion. One view is that these three days are the days of Makara Sankranti, Ratha Saptami and the full moon of the month of Magha. But some people suggest the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of the bright half of the month of Magha as the three days.

Padma, as quoted in the *Nirnaya Sindhu,* says:

महामाघीं पुरस्कृत्य सस्नौ तत्र दिनत्रयम् ।

''*He bathed for three days ending with the full moon of Magha.*''

The Magha full moon is known as Maghi.

When Jupiter is in Leo, there is a special Kumbha *yatra* at Nasik but the sacred days extend over the whole period of one year. Magha-snana is specially recommended in Prayaga and particularly so when Jupiter is in Taurus, when the great Kumbha Mela is held at Allahabad.

There is a special *yoga* known as *ardhodaya.* Some hold it as taking place on the *amavasya* of Pausha. Others take it to be the *amavasya* of Magha. Great merit is attached to this yoga, when waters at every sacred place are considered holy as those of the Ganges.

अर्धोदये तु संप्राप्ते सर्वं गङ्गासमं जलम् ।

Regarding Magha-snana, it has been stated that after taking a bath in the cold water at the *tirtha* or even without taking a bath one should not sit near fire to warm oneself.

न वह्निं सेवयेत्स्नातो ह्यस्नातोऽपि वरानने ।
होमार्थं सेवयेद् वह्निं शीतार्थं च कदाचन ॥

Fire is to be approached for the performance of a sacrifice and not for getting rid of the cold. Evidently this is intended for the development of the quality of *Titiksha* or getting used to heat and cold, happiness and misery, etc..

A gift of *tila* or sesame mixed with sugar is recommended. It is further stated that after the bath one must worship Madhava holding the conch and discus; offer oblations in fire as prescribed and eat only once in a day. One should sleep on the ground and observe celibacy.

शङ्खचक्रधरं देवं माधवं नाम पूजयेत् ।
वह्निं हुत्वा विधानेन ततस्त्वेकाशनो भवेत् ।
भूशय्या ब्रह्मचर्येण शक्तः स्थानं समाचरेत् ॥

—*Nirnayasindhu.*

40. GWALIOR

शेषाहितल्पधवलाधरभागभासिवक्षःस्थलोल्लसितकौस्तुभकान्तिशोणम् ।
श्यामं वपुः शशिविरोचनबिम्बचुम्बिव्योमप्रकाशमवतान्नरकद्विषो वः ।।

—*Verse of Baladitya's Gwalior Prasasti of Emperor Mihira Bhoja.*

"May the dark coloured body of Vishnu, the enemy of demon Naraka, protect you. That body is illuminated by the white lower portion of the bed of the serpent Sesha and is also made red by the shining Kaustuba jewel placed on the chest. Thus, this body of Vishnu has the lustre of the blue sky kissed by the discs of the sun and the moon."

Gwalior, in Madhya Bharat, was one of the largest States in Central India Agency ruled by the Scindias. Gwalior city is on the Bombay-Delhi line of the Central Railway and is 195 miles from Delhi. It consists of 3 different towns. One is the old Gwalior of great antiquity, on the northern side of the fort; the second is Lashkar, developed by Maharaja Danratarao Scindia (about 1800 A.D.) as his military camp and the third is Morar, which was developed as a British Cantonment on the eastern side of the fort. All three towns, well linked together by roads and means of communication, go to make up the modern city of Gwalior.

The fortress is situated on the summit of a rock. The old city and the hill were known in old inscriptions as Gopagiri or Gopadri or Gopachala. This rock and the old city contain numerous old relics of great interest.

Ranojirao Scindia was the illustrious commander of the army under Peshwa Balaji Bajirao in the 18th century, and he founded the ruling line at Gwalior. On account of his various capacities he was given the right of collecting revenue in Malwa and Gwalior.

His son Jankoji succeeded him in 1745 for a few years. Thereafter, came Mahadji Scindia, his brother, who was a soldier and statesman of great ability. In 1782 he entered into a treaty with the British, by which he became an independent chief. His services were highly valued by the East India Company. His successor Daulatrao Scindia shifted the capital from Ujjain to Gwalior.

The fort on the rock has a history which goes back to a period beyond the 5th Century A.D.. There are relics and monuments of the Guptas, Hoonas, Kachhwahas, Pratiharas, Tomaras, Pathans, Moghuls, English and the Maratthas. The fortress stands on a hill which is flat. Its length is about 2 miles and its width varies at different places. There are two ways to climb the rock, one through the Gwalior Gate in the East, and the other through the Urwahi Gate on the West.

On the eastern road to the fort is situated the small ancient Chaturbhuj temple of Vishnu cut out of a rock. It was constructed in 875 A.D.. There are two contemporary Sanskrit inscriptions. They are engraved on this small monolithic temple. The first inscription is engraved on the front door and consists of 27 Sanskrit verses, full of *alankaras*.

This Vishnu temple was built by Alla, the son of Vaillabhatta and grandson of Nagarabhatta, and was consecrated in Samvat year 932 *i.e.* 875 A.D.. This Nagarabhatta belonged to the Varjara family and immigrated from Anandpura in Latamandala *i.e.* Vadnagar in Gujarat. Vaillabhatta held the post of the chief of the boundaries (Maryada Dhurya) in the service of the Pratihara King Ram Dev of Kanauj. Alla, who succeeded his father in office, was appointed the guardian of Gopadri, i.e. the fort of Gwalior by Srimat Adivaraha *i.e.* the Pratihara King Mihirabhoja. The second inscription is of the time of Parameswara Bhojadev. It records four donations made to two temples which were built by the said Alla, the son of Vaillabhatta. Here Alla is described as the Kottapala, or the guardian of the fort of Gopagiri. The donations are made to the Nava Durga temple and the Vishnu temple. In verse 27 of the first inscription it is stated that in the Samvat year 932 in the month of Vaisakha, the image of Lord Vishnu was installed with great devotion in this lovely temple which consists of a single piece of rock (*ekashile bhavane*).

These two inscriptions are published in *Epigraphica Indica,* Vol. I, page 154.

In 1896, to the west of the town of Gwalior, a stone inscription was found on the Sagartal. It is a prasasti composed by poet Baladitya, son of Bhatta Dhanneka. The inscription records the erection of a temple by the Gurjara Pratihara Emperor, Mihira Bhoja, in his seraglio compound (Antahpura) in honour of Lord Vishnu. This inscription is published in *Epigraphica Indica,* Vol. XVIII of 1925-26 and has been re-edited by Dr. R. C. Majumdar. It is also published in Shri K. M. Munshi's treatise, "The Glory that was Gurjaradesa, Part III", on p. 260. The discovery of this inscription has greatly helped the historians in their researches in connection with the Imperial dynasty of the Gurjara-Pratiharas of Kanauj, which played a very important part in the 9th Century A.D..

This inscription surveys briefly the history of the Pratihara empire as founded by Vatsaraj, who is described as possessed of mighty prowess and who was master of the greater part of Northern India. He laid the foundation of a mighty empire. The Pratihara King Vatsaraj and the Pala King Dharmapal were each fighting for an Empire in the north. The Rashtrakuta King Dhruva inflicted a defeat on both of them. Vatsaraja was succeeded by Nagabhatta II, who won back the lost fortunes of his family. He defeated Chakrayuda of Kanauj and conquered numerous other kings. It appears that he made Kanauj the permanent capital of Pratiharas and also scored a great victory over the Pala King Dharmapal.

The Rashtrakuta King, Govinda III, defeated Nagabhatta II some time before 809 A.D.. This Nagabhatta II ruled over a greater part of Rajputana, Saurashtra, Gwalior and Kanauj. He died in or about 833 A.D.. He was succeeded by his son Ramabhadra, who ruled only for three years and that too in an inglorious manner. He was succeeded by his famous son Bhoja or Mihira Bhoja, who ascended the throne by about 836 A.D..

Mihira Bhoja consolidated the Empire once again. Though he was defeated by the Palas, the Rashtrakutas and the Kalachuris, he was not discouraged. Assisted by his vassals, he defeated the Pala King, Narayana Pala, and annexed a greater part of his territories. He ruled over a large part of Saurashtra and extended his Empire right up to the Punjab and Oudh and had powerful vassals in the Kalachuris and the Chandellas. He made Kanauj his imperial capital. He ruled for 46 years. Sulaiman, the Arab writer of 851 A.D. describes him as a powerful King of Juzr or Gurjara. The Pratihara Empire had four illustrious rulers, Vatsaraja, Nagabhatta II, Mihira Bhoja and Mahendra Pala, and it was the last great empire which flourished for about a 100 years in Northern India before the Muslim invasion. They effectively stopped the progress of Muslim invasion from Sind for nearly 300 years.

The Gwalior Prasasti of Baladitya describes Mihira Bhoja as a very powerful King.

The Gujari Mahal was built by Raja Mansingh for his queen Mriganayana, a Gujari by caste. Raja Mansingh who flourished between 1486 to 1516 A.D. also built a splendid palace here. It is 300 ft. long and 80 ft. high with 6 towers. Raja Mansingh was a great patron of architecture and music, and his palace is a glorious edifice and a remarkable example of the Hindu palace of that age.

On the eastern verge of the rock there are two temples known as *Sasbahu* temples, about a mile from Raja Mansingh's palace. One of them is smaller and the other is a larger temple and being side by side they are popularly known as '*sasbahu*' meaning the 'mother-in-law' and the 'daughter-in-law'. A sanskrit inscription on the porch of the '*sas* temple' states that the temple was completed in 1093 A.D. in the reign of Mahipala, a *Kachhwaha* Rajput prince of Gwalior. These are Vishnu temples and their style is very ornate. They were originally mistaken as Jain temples, but they were dedicated to Padmanabha or Vishnu. The doorways, ceiling and the massive pillars including the elaborate carving make them very imposing structures.

Telika Mandir is the 9th Century Vishnu temple. Its *shikara* is in Dravidian style, while the decorative details are of Northern India. It is the loftiest building in the fort of Gwalior, being more than 100 ft. high.

On the slopes of the rock there are numerous Jain sculptures of various sizes. They mostly belong to the 15th Century A.D.. There are a number of images of Jain Tirthankaras. One standing image is as tall as 57 ft.

In Gwalior there is the tomb of Muhammad Ghaus, a Muhammedan saint, who was the Guru of Akbar. It is situated half a mile to the east of the fort. It has nice architecture, an imposing dome and intricate *jali* work (filigree).

By the side of it is the tomb of Tansen, who was one of the nine gems of the Court of Emperor Akbar, and who was one of the greatest musicians of India. He was born in Gwalior and also died here. Near his tomb there is a tamarind tree and musicians with great faith and devotion chew the leaves of this tree in order to make their voice sweet. Tansen was the son of Makarand Pande and his original name was Tannamitra. He had the capacity to imitate exactly all possible kinds of voices. It is said that a saint, Haridas Baba, recognised his gift, took him with him and taught him the best of music. Akbar appreciated his genius and included him in the group of his nine gems. It is said that once Akbar asked him a question: "How is it that there is a difference between the music sung by you and your teacher Sri Haridas?" Tansen appropriately replied: "My Guru Sri Haridas sings according to his own sweet mood, while I have to sing as per the order of the Emperor."

Near the Telika Mandir there is a small tank known as Suraj kund and the tradition is that its waters have the efficacy of curing one of leprosy and that King Surajpal, the mythical founder of the fort of Gwalior, was cured of that disease.

Apart from these old monuments, there are several other edifices worth seeing in Gwalior. The Jai Vilas Palace is built in the Italian palazzo style. The Moti Mahal has mosaic work of coloured glass and mural paintings containing scenes from mythology and of Ragas and Raginis. The group of *chhatris* are impressive, particularly the *chhatri* of Maharaja Jayajirao Scindia. On the station road is the memorial of the famous Queen Lakshmibai of Jhansi who fell after bravely fighting against numerous odds in her last battle at Gwalior in the Indian war of Independence of 1857-58 A.D.. The spot marks the site where her body was cremated by a few of her devoted followers, who were still left with her.

The following is the first verse from the inscription at the Chaturbhuj Temple of Vishnu constructed by Alla, son of Vaillabhatta and grandson of Nagarbhatta of Varnagar in Gujarat and who was appointed the guardian of the fort of Gwalior, or Gopadri, by the Gurjara Pratihara Emperor Mihira Bhoja:

> कालिन्द्याः किं जलौघो घनतिमिरनिभोजाह्नवीस्पर्धया नः
> प्रोद्यातः किन्न भूयो गगनतलगतिं विन्ध्यसानुर्विहन्तुम् ।
> चिक्रंसोर्यस्य दृष्ट्वा चरणमतिचिरं सप्तयो नैव पूष्णो
> जग्मुः क्षोभादिवोच्चैर्नभसि स मधुजिद् हन्तु वः कल्मषाणि ॥

"May Vishnu destroy your sins! the horses of the Sun do not proceed further in the lofty sky for a long time as they appear to be afraid of seeing Vishnu as Vamana crossing the sky with his step; the horses seem to imagine that while competing with the heavenly Ganges, the flood of waters of Yamuna, like dense darkness, has crossed the sky or that the ridge of the Vindhya mountain has again risen sky-high to obstruct the path of these horses of the Sun."

41. KOLHAPUR

कोलापुरं महास्थानं यत्र लक्ष्मीः सदा स्थिता ।
मातुःपुरं द्वितीयं च रेणुकाधिष्ठित परम् ॥
तुलजापुरं तृतीयं स्यात् सप्तश्रृंगं तथैव च ।

—*Devi Bhagavata*, 1-38, Verses 5 & 6.

Sri Devi describes to Himalaya the various sacred places connected with the Goddess, the penances and festivals connected with her, etc.. The goddess starts with Kolhapur and describes four Devi tirthas in Maharashtra. She says: "*Kolhapur is a great city where abides goddess Mahalakshmi. Matuhpura (Mahur) is the city of goddess Renuka. Tulajapur is the third, the city of goddess Bhavani. Saptashringi (a hill near Nasik) is the fourth sacred spot of the goddess.*"

Kolhapur was the capital of the Kolhapur State and is situated 16° 41′ N. and 74° 17′ E.. It is situated near the south bank of river Panchaganga.

Kolhapur was formerly called Karavir and was one of the most ancient religious and trade-centres in Western India. Brahmapuri is situated in the centre of the present city and on this site numerous Buddhist coins and relics of the first Century B.C. have been found. A stone box was found at Kolhapur containing a casket made of crystal and it appears there was a Buddhist *stupa* at this place, along with certain other *viharas* and cells for Buddhist monks. Various articles were found in this Brahmapuri hill consisting of some articles of Buddhist worship including the image of a *stupa*, certain circular objects like prayer-wheels and a flower pot. As a number of coins were found near about this place, Sir R. G. Bhandarkar conjectured that this Brahmapuri hill conceals the ruins of an old city. (*Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* Vol. XXIV, page 153). However, he states from the characters engraved on the lid of the casket-receptacle that they are older than those of the times of the later Andhrabhrityas and belong to the first or second century of the Christian era. The coins found near Kolhapur, according to him, were probably struck on this side of the country by the Viceroys of the Andhrabhritya kings, whose capital was Dhantakataka. Perhaps Ptolemy's "*Hippokura-Rejia Baleokuri*" refers to Kolhapur as the capital of King Vilivayakura, who seems to have reigned about 150 A.D.. Mr. Fleet suggests that as Kolhapur's old name is Karavir (a fragrant flower), it may be identified with the ancient trade centre of Tagar, which also means a fragrant shrub. This identification is, however, doubted as Tagar is placed to the East and not to the South of Paithan.

As noted earlier, the Brahmapuri Hill has disclosed numerous Buddhist relics including a *stupa* and *viharas,* but the most ancient and sacred place known at the present time in Kolhapur is the temple of goddess Mahalakshmi or Ambabai. Kolhapur is sacred, having about 250 temples of which those of Mahalakshmi, Vithoba, Temblai, Mahakali, Pratyangiras (Phirangai) and Yallamma are famous. Among all of them Mahalakshmi or Ambabai is the most ancient as also the most important one. It is situated in the middle of the town at a short distance from the Kolhapur Palace.

Right up to the 12th Century Shakti worship was quite prominent in Maharashtra. After Jnaneshwar, Namdev and other Vaishnava saints, Vaishnavism as preached by these Maharashtra saints became very prominent. In spite of this the worship of Sakti still continued. The popular name for the goddess in Maharashtra is Bhavani. There are four main centres of Sakti worship in Maharashtra. The first is Kolhapur or Karavir, being the seat of Mahalakshmi, also called Ambabai. The second is Matuhpura, same as Mahur, in the present Hyderabad State. Mahur is the seat of goddess Renuka. This goddess is the family deity of Sri Ekanath Maharaj. In Tulajapur, in the present Nizam State, is the seat of goddess Bhavani, the Kuladevi of Samarth Ramdas Swami and his famous disciple Chhatrapati Sivaji Maharaj. The sword of Sri Sivaji Maharaj was known as the sword of Bhavani and he is said to have received it as a gift from goddess Bhavani. Sakti worship in Maharashtra is mainly puranic. Saptasringi hill is situated near Nasik and this is also one of the ancient seats of the goddess.

In ancient times, this great temple of Mahalakshmi at Kolhapur was surrounded by a number of other temples, some of which still lie buried several feet under the ground. In and around the city are found many broken images of Brahmanical and Jain worship, supposed to have been destroyed in the 13th and 14th Centuries by the Muslims. Major Graham after a careful survey has concluded that in the 8th or 9th Century there was an earthquake in Kolhapur which overturned many temples and buildings. Among the traces of this earthquake are the two underground temples of Khandoba and Kartikaswami, over which houses were subsequently built. Even in the famous temple of Ambabai, the wall has been found to be of unequal height and the ground is noted to have passed through many changes. By digging at a depth of about 15 feet old stone-slabs, strange figures and inscriptions have been found.

Karavir or *Kolhapur Mahatmya* describes the sacredness of Kolhapur and calls it the Kashi of the South. This work is taken to be a modern one and is said to belong to 1730 A.D..

There is a tradition that this place, in olden times, was surrounded by a dreary jungle and was full of numerous holy temples and sacred pools. Major Graham observes that the convulsion which altered the ancient aspect of this place was probably effected by the earthquake and that slight shocks had again occurred during the year 1853. Many geological facts support this opinion. In support of this it has been noted that the bed of river Panchaganga was found at an elevation of about 70 feet above its present level.

It is said that during the religious persecutions of certain Muslim rulers the present image of Goddess Mahalakshmi was concealed in a private dwelling-house and that it was re-established in the present temple only in the first quarter of the 18th Century by Shidoji Hindurao Gorepaday, one of the ancestors of Himmat Bahadur, deputed for the purpose from Panhala, which was the seat of the Government of Kolhapur, by Shambaji Maharaj, the son of Rajaram. There is a sanad of that time mentioning grants assigned by the prince for the expenses of the temple. The sanad says that even though many devotees desired to replace the image, Shambaji alone had the merit of re-establishing the image in this ancient temple.

It is said that the upper parts of the temple were constructed by Sri Shankaracharya of Sankheshwar. One view is that as the image of god Ganapati is not there in the front portion of the building and as there are many figures on the walls in Buddhist and Jainist attitudes, one of them being completely naked, and as the style of the architecture is akin to Jain temples, this temple was originally a temple of the Jain goddess Padmavati. The

Jains have asserted that not only did the temple once belong to them but that the goddess is also the Jain goddess Padmavati.

There are a few Canarese inscriptions testifying to the existence of the Jain superiority in this locality. They commemorated the grants by Gunduraditya and his contemporaries in the 11th Century of the Salivahana Era. Sanskrit inscriptions, however, mention the name of Mahalakshmi.

The Mahatmya of Kolhapur is mentioned in *Devi Bhagavata, Matsya, Padma* and *Brahmanda Puranas.* It is considered one of the *Siddhapeethas* of the goddess. It is the most famous *Sakti Peetha* in Maharashtra. Every year lakhs of pilgrims come here on pilgrimage. The descendants of Chhatrapati Sivaji Maharaj were rulers here. During the Navaratri festival and particularly during the 5th of Aswin Sukla, a number of ceremonies are performed. On Chaitra Purnima the *Utsava Murti* of the goddess is carried in procession through the town. On Fridays a palanquin is carried round the enclosure. On Aswin Purnima the temple door is lighted with lamps. A great bell of the temple seems to have been obtained from the Portuguese and it bears the following inscription in Portuguese:

"Hail Mary, full of grace
Lord is with thee."

The temple is in the form of a cross and is built in what is known as "Hemadpanti" style with mortarless close-fitting large blocks of stone. The temple faces the west on which side is the main entrance. Under the big dome on the East is installed an image of Mahalakshmi and under the North and South domes are installed two smaller images of Maha-Kali and Maha-Saraswati. Around the image of Mahalakshmi or Ambabai there is a passage for worshippers to go round. The main temple is surrounded by a stone wall and in this enclosure there are several smaller shrines, being those of Sri Dattatreya, Sri Vithoba, Sri Kashi-Visweshwara, Rama and Radha-Krishna.

Particularly on the 5th of Aswin Sukla, the image of the goddess is taken out in procession to the small temple of Temblai, about three miles to the East of the city. According to *Karavir Mahatmya,* Temblai is the younger sister of Mahalakshmi. There was a quarrel between the two and Temblai left Kolhapur in the beginning of the Christian Era and retired to a place about three miles away from the city, turning her back on her elder sister Mahalakshmi. Ambabai is said to pay a visit to her on Aswin Sukla 5th.

Vithoba's temple, in point of construction, is believed to be as old as Ambabai's temple. It is similar in style to that of Ambabai temple. The temple of Maha-Kali is in Budhwar Street and that of Pratyangiras or Phirangai between Mangalwar and new Budhwar streets. The temple of Yallamma is in the East of the city. Unmarried women make vows to her. The chief of the underground temples are those of Kartikaswami and Khandoba. There are two mutts in Kolhapur, one of Sankeshwar Sankaracharya and the other of Jain Swamiji.

The Rajah's palace in Kolhapur is in the centre of the town having three stories and about 200 rooms. It is situated in a large fortified square. The western entrance is surmounted by chambers and has polished and perfect slabs.

The early history of Kolhapur is partly mythical and partly historic. There was the Muslim period from 1347 to about 1700 A.D. followed by the Maratha period.

The Silaharas of Kolhapur who ruled it from 10 to

13 centuries claim to be the descendants of Vidyadara Jimuta Vahana who saved the Naga King, Sankha Chuda, from Garuda by offering his own body to him for being torn to pieces instead of that of Sankha Chuda. Silahara rulers carried the banner of Garuda. This story of Jimuta Vahana is dramatised by Harsha in his famous Sanskrit drama called *Nagananda.* The Silaharas of Kolhapur were Jains and were worshippers of Mahalakshmi. In the Sanskrit drama *Nagananda,* the Buddhist doctrine of non-violence is eulogised, but the hero Jimuta Vahana who had died and given up his body to Garuda in place of Sankha Chuda was revived by Goddess Amba on the prayer of his wife, princess Malayavati. It was goddess Ambabai who brought back to life Vidyadara Jimuta Vahana by sprinkling water on him.

करवीरे महालक्ष्मीरुमादेवी विनायके ।
अरोगा वैद्यनाथे तु महाकाले महेश्वरी ।

—*Matsya* 13-41, Chap. 13-108, *Matsyapurana.*

"Goddess Mahalakshmi is at Karavira or Kolhapur, Umadevi, at Vinayaka, Aroga at Vaidyanatha, and Maheshwari at Mahakala."

42. NAIMISARANYA

रोमहर्षणपुत्र उग्रश्रवाः सौतिः पौराणिको नैमिशारण्ये शौनकस्य कुलपते
द्वादशवार्षिके सत्रे–सुखासीनानभ्यगच्छद् ब्रह्मर्षीन् संशितव्रतान् ।
विनयावनतो भूत्वा कदाचित्सूतनन्दनः ॥

—*Adi Parva-Mahabharata,* Chap. I, 5-6.

"Sauti Ugrashravas, son of Romaharshana and the reciter of Puranas came to Naimisharanya in the 12 *years' sacrificial session of Kulapati Saunaka and approached the sages there, who were the upholders of vows and seated happily."*

Naimisaranya is situated 27° 22′ N. and 80° 29′ E., at the junction of the roads from Sitapur and Khairabad. Its distance from Sitapur is 20 miles. It is called Nimkhar or Nimsar, and is 24 miles from Sandila station. It is 45 miles North-west of Lucknow and is situated on the left bank of river Gomati. Naimisaranya is a place of great antiquity and sanctity. Many of the puranas were, most probably, written here.

In the Adi Parva of *Mahabharata,* Chapter I, verses 5 and 6, it has been stated that the *puranic* reciter Sauti Ugrashravas, son of Romaharshana, came to the sacrificial session of Kulapati Saunaka. There he contacted the sages. This Sauti studied all the traditional literature connected with Dharma and Artha as expounded by Vyasa. He recited this literature before the sages residing at Naimisaranya. This Sauti told the sages that Krishna-Dwaipayana had recited numerous *kathas* in the Sarpa Satra of King Janamejaya. Sauti had heard these kathas as related in *Mahabharata* and had also visited Kurukshetra where the *Mahabharata* war had taken place.

Sauti had come down from there to Naimisaranya and he recited before the sages the Itihasa and Purana as composed by Vyasa.

The word Romaharshana is derived in this way in the Kurma Purana: "On hearing him recite the puranic stories the hair of the audience stood on their ends, that is, they had horripilation."

The word 'Naimisa' has been spelt in two ways (नैमिश) and (नैमिष). One legend is that Pitamaha Brahma sent out a *manomaya* wheel after saluting Mahadeva. The wheel went on moving at different places. Its rim was shattered at the place which is now known as Naimisaranya. Sages followed the course of that wheel which was as bright as the Sun, and they stopped at Naimisaranya where the rim of the wheel was shattered.

एतन्मनोमयं चक्र मया सृष्टं विसृज्यते ।
यत्रास्य शीर्यते नेमिः स देशस्तपसः शुभः ॥
इत्युक्त्वा सूर्यसंकाशं चक्रं सृष्ट्वा मनोमयम् ।
प्रणिपत्य महादेवं विससर्ज पितामहः ॥
तेऽपि हृष्टतरा विप्राः प्रणम्य जगतां प्रभुम् ।
प्रययुस्तस्य चक्रस्य यत्र नेमि र्व्यशीर्यत ॥
तद्वनं तेन विख्यातं नैमिशं मुनिपूजितम् ।

This version is given in *Vayu Purana*, 2-8 and *Brahmanda Purana*, 1-8. Another version is given in the *Varaha Purana*. As stated to Sage Gauramukha, the entire army of the *Danavas* was destroyed at this place in one *nimesha*. Therefore, this forest was known as Naimisharanya.

एवं कृत्वा ततो देवो मुनिं गौरमुखं तदा ।
उवाच निमिषेणेदं निहतं दाववं बलम् ।
अरण्येऽस्मिस्ततस्त्वेतन्निमिषारण्यसंज्ञितम् ॥

This place is considered very sacred. Those who stay here are stated to have no fear from *kali*. It was here that Sauti recited the *Mahabharata* to the sages. Devi Bhagavata says that among the various kshetras, the following are especially sacred, viz. Pushkara, Kurukshetra, Dharmaranya, Prabhasa, Prayag, Naimisaranya and Arbudaranya.

This Naimisaranya, which is now known as Nimkhar or Nimsar, has numerous sacred tanks and temples. As stated in the earlier legend, it is believed that Brahma and all the sages moved after the wheel sent out by Brahma and they were accompanied by three and half crores of *tirthas*; all of them settled down at Nimkhar.

In *Ain-i-Akbari,* Nimkhar has been described in the following way: "Nimkhar is a famous large fort and a place of great religious resort; the river Gowdy runs near it. Here are a great number of idols in temples. In the neighbourhood of this place is a reservoir of water, called *Brahmavarta Kund,* which bubbles up so violently and has such a circular motion that a man cannot force his way down into it, as it ejects whatever is thrown into it. Near this place there is also a hill with a very small spring of water, whose stream runs into the river Gowdy. The spring is only 4 inches deep and an ell in breadth. The brahmins resort hither to pay their devotion. The sand, which is the bed of this stream, sometimes assumes the form of Mahadeva, which vanishes again suddenly. If rice or any other light substance be thrown into this stream, it disappears entirely. Here is also a place called *Cheramutti,* where, during the feast of *holly,* flames issue out of the ground in a most astonishing manner." (*Ain-I-Akbari,* pages 325-326).

The reservoir, mentioned in *Ain-i-Akbari,* is the *chakra tirtha.* It is the place where the wheel of Brahma fell. It is also the place where Lord Vishnu flung his discus at the *asuras.* This *chakra tirtha* is hexagonal in shape. Apart from this, there are other sacred tanks also, *viz.* the Pancha Prayaga, the Godavari, the Kashi, the Gangotri and the Gomati.

From the station of Sandila, one can conveniently go to Naimisaranya, Misraka and Hatyaharana tirthas. The famous poet Surdasji stayed here.

Naimisaranya has been referred to in Kathaka Samhita as a place where sacrificial sessions were held. It is also referred to in the Panchavimsa Brahmana and Kaushitaki Brahmana. *Mahabharata* was recited here by Sauti. It is frequently mentioned in *Mahabharata, Ramayana* and also in most of the Puranas. Some scholars hold the view that most of the puranas were composed and recited here in the presence of sages. Vana Parva says that all *tirthas* are concentrated at Naimisaranya. This *tirtha* is described as very holy on earth and is stated to be very dear to Lord Sankara. This land of great antiquity is also famous on account of the fact that holy sages performed their penances here. It is considered highly meritorious to have a bath in the sacred tanks of this place, on Somavati Amavasya. The Parikrama fair is held here in the month of Phalguna. The chief temple of this place is that of Lalita Devi. Large crowds collect here on the Parikrama fair, as also on every Amavasya and pilgrims take their bath at the *chakra tirtha* and pay their homage to Lalita Devi and other deities. The Parikrama fair begins at Nimkhar and ends at Misrikh (Misraka). People collect at Nimkhar in the bright half of the month of Phalguna and after going to Korauna, Haraiya, Sakin, Dahi, Gomati and Deogaon, they return via Mundarwa and Jargawan to Nimkhar. They then go to Barehti and then reach Misrikh (Misraka).

In Misrikh there is the *Dadichi kund.* It is known as Mishraka because Vyasa mixed all *tirthas* here. It is also stated that the gods demanded from Sage Dadichi his bones so that the gods could prepare a missile out of it and destroy the demons. The kind-hearted sage agreed to do this. Gods collected all *tirthas* here. Sage Dadichi took his bath here and then gave up his body. The *Hatyaharana tirtha* is very near Misraka and a great fair is held here in the month of Bhadrapada. It is stated that after killing Ravana, who was a Brahmin, Sri Rama bathed at this place and was thereafter purified of the sin of Brahmahatya.

Naimisaranya forest has been considered an abode of 60,000 sages. *Ramayana* mentions it as situated on the left bank of the river Gomati.

Romaharshana is known as Suta and he is credited with having recited the various puranas at Naimisaranya. Suta is described as the son of a Kshaktriya father and a Brahmin mother. This Romaharshana was so adept in the art of oratory and recitation that he won the hearts of the audience and made their hair stand on end. He was the fifth pupil of Vyasa who had taught him the Itihasa and the Purana. When Vyasa composed the great *Adi Purana* he taught it to Romaharshana and the latter taught it to his son Ugrashravas. In *Bhagawata Purana* it is stated that once Romaharshana was carrying on discussions on puranas in some great sacrificial session. At that time, Balarama, the elder brother of Sri Krishna, who was on a pilgrimage, came to Naimisaranya. All the sages who had collected there paid homage to Balarama by getting up, except Romaharshana who was presiding on the occasion of the *Puranic* discussions and who was under a vow, and so did not get up. Balarama was very angry at this. He thought that this Romaharshana, a Suta, born of pratiloma marriage, was thinking too much about himself, believing that he was even greater than

Brahmins. In a fit of great indignation Balarama killed Romaharshana then and there. The question then arose as to who would recite and tell the puranas. Then Balarama said, after discussing the problem with the sages, that Ugrashravas, the son of Romaharsana, should take his father's place and recite the puranas.

In *Padma Purana* it is stated that Balarama killed Romaharshana on the 12th day of the bright half of Ashadha. It is further stated that by that time Romaharshana had recited only 10½ puranas out of 18. The remaining 7½ puranas were thereafter completed by his son Ugrashravas.

In *Vayu Purana* it is stated that it is the function of the Suta community to maintain the lists of the *vamsas* of the gods, the sages and the kings. They have to recite the Itihasa and the Purana.

> स्वधर्म एष सूतस्य सद्भिर्दृष्टः पुरातनैः ।
> देवतानामृषीणां च राज्ञां चामिततेजसाम् ॥
> वंशानां धारणं कार्यं श्रुतानां च महात्मनाम् ।
> न हि वेदेष्वधीकारः कश्चित् सूतस्य दृश्यते ॥

43. VAIDYANATH

मुहूर्तके ह्यतिक्रान्ते गोपोऽभूद् विकलस्तदा ।
भूमौ संस्थापयामास तद्भारेणातिपीडितः ॥
तत्रैव तत्स्थितं लिङ्गं वज्रसारसमुद्भवम् ।
सर्वकामप्रदं चैव दर्शनात्पापहारकम् ॥
वैद्यनाथेश्वरं नाम्ना तल्लिङ्गमभवन्मुने ।
प्रसिद्धं त्रिषु लोकेषु भुक्तिमुक्तिप्रदं सताम् ॥

—*Siva Purana, Kotirudra Samhita*
(Chap. 28-18 to 20)

"After one Muhurta was over, the Gopa (to whom Ravana had entrusted the Jyotirlinga to be held in his hands) became uneasy, and deposited that Linga on the ground being overpowered with its weight. That Linga, which was as hard and heavy as the thunderbolt, and was capable of satisfying all desires and destroying all sins on its mere sight, lay there on the ground. It became famous in the three worlds by the name of Vaidyanath."

In Vaidyanath or Deogarh is the famous Jyotirlinga of Siva. Several places in India claim that the temple of the Jyotirlinga of Vaidyanath is situated in those respective localities. There is one temple of Vaidyanath in Deogarh, in the Santal Parganas in Bengal. There is another place in Hyderabad, a few miles away from Paithan and Gangakhed, known as the village of Parani. Here also there is a big temple of Vaidyanath near a hill. People of this side believe that this Vaidyanath of Parani is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas, but reference in *Siva Purana* and *Brihad Dharma Purana* go to suggest that the Jyotirlinga of Vaidyanath is the one situated in

Deogarh in the Santal Parganas. There is also a temple of Vaidyanath at Kiragram in the Punjab and one at Dabhoi in Gujarat.

This Deogarh in Santal Parganas is a railway station surrounded by Data jungle to the north-east, by Nandaha Pahar in the north-west, and by Trikatu Parvata in the east and south; in the west is a small rivulet called Yamunajor and also river Dharua.

This Deogarh is a very well-known place of pilgrimage. Tradition as recorded in *Siva Purana* says that in the Treta Yuga, Ravana, King of Lanka, went to Kailas to propitiate Lord Shankara and to request the Lord to come over to Lanka so that Ravana's capital might become invincible. Ravana performed severe penance, going to the length of even offering his nine heads as oblations to Lord Siva, who being thus propitiated gave Ravana one of his 12 Jyotirlingas, on the condition that if Ravana at any time placed the Jyotirlinga on the ground it would remain there fixed on that spot for ever. Ravana carried the Linga with him and started on his journey back to Lanka. The gods became nervous on knowing that Lord Siva's emblem, *viz.* the Jyotirlinga, was going to be deposited in Lanka, the capital of Ravana, and they devised a plan to outwit Ravana. Varuna, the Lord of waters, entered the belly of Ravana, who immediately became extremely uneasy to relieve himself. Vishnu, according to one version, came down in the garb of an old brahmin. According to another version, Ravana saw a Gopa standing nearby. Ravana requested the Brahmin or the Gopa, whoever he was, to help him by holding the Jyotirlinga for some time till he returned after easing himself. The brahmin or the Gopa, after some time, felt that he was overburdened with the weight of the Linga, placed it on the ground and disappeared. When Ravana came back he was highly irritated to find that the Jyotirlinga had been placed on the ground. He tried hard to remove it but could not succeed. In desperation he even tried to break it, but could only succeed in breaking a small piece on the top of the Linga. Realising that it was impossible to remove it, he again offered his prayers and worshipped the Linga. Nearby he excavated a pool of water in which he collected waters from all the sacred tirthas of the earth. *Siva Purana*, Kotirudra Samhita, explains in Chapter 28 the name of Vaidyanath in this way: 'Ravana cut down nine of his heads and offered them in oblations to Lord Siva. Afterwards when Lord Siva was propitiated, He satisfied the desires of Ravana by granting him invincible strength as he looked at Ravana with His grace-giving eyes; and the nine heads of Ravana which hád been cut off were once again joined to the body as if by the operation of a *vaidya* or a physician.''

अमोघया सुदृष्ट्या वैं वैद्यवद्योजितानि मे ।
शिरांसि संघयित्वा तु दृष्टानि परमात्मना ॥

Kotirudra, 28-55

Chapter 28 of *Kotirudra Samhita* carries the legend of Ravana still further. Even though the Jyotirlinga so placed on the ground was fixed on the earth, the gods continued to be nervous as Ravana had acquired invincible and immense strength in consequence of the boon of Lord Siva. Seeing the anxiety of the gods, Narada went to Ravana and persuaded him to shake Mount Kailas itself so that Lord Siva would pay more attention to him. Following his advice Ravana went to Kailas, employed his newly acquired strength in shaking the mountain, and caused a lot of disturbance there. Parvati taunted Siva by telling him that he had given strength to an undeserving person. Lord Siva thereupon cursed Ravana by saying that as Ravana had become excessively conceited, a person would be born to destroy his conceit.

There is another legend which relates that this Jyotirlinga was neglected for a long time after the death of Ravana. Ultimately, it was noticed by a hunter named Baiju who started worshipping it daily. Originally, this Jyotirlinga was known as Ravaneswara, but after it was worshipped by the hunter Baiju, it became known as Baidyanath.

This Vaidyanath temple, as mentioned above, was established by Ravana. It is further recorded that this place is also sacred to Parvati, the consort of Lord Siva. There are 52 places said to be sacred to Parvati. When Sati threw herself into the sacrificial altar where she was insulted by her father Daksha, Lord Siva in delirium carried her corpse on his shoulders. Vishnu cut the corpse in 52 parts, which fell at different places all over India and they became famous Saktipeethas. It is stated that the heart of Sati fell at Vaidyanath or Deogarh, and therefore this place is known as the Hardapeetha.

This Vaidyanath or Deogarh is called Pampapuri or Palugaon and Sri Dey surmises that it is a corruption of Paralipura or Paraligrama. In the *stotra* of the 12 Jyotirlingas it is stated that the Jyotir linga of Vaidyanath is at Parali.

The place where Ravana is said to have gone to relieve himself is situated in the north-east corner of Deogarh, and is called Harlajudi. This is interpreted as a corruption of the word "Haritaki Vana." As a result of Ravana easing himself, there was a rivulet to the north of Harlajudi known as karmanasa. Harlajudi is four miles from Deogarh. The Jyotirlinga of Vaidyanath was deposited at Deogarh. Trikuta Parvata is about six or seven miles east of Vaidyanath. Tapovana is the place where Ravana is said to have performed penance to propitiate Siva and it is also situated nearby.

There is a legend which records that Brahmins originally worshipped this Jyotirlinga, but they became slothful. One Baiju, a cattle-keeper, became angry with the Brahmins and resolved that he would beat the Jyotirlinga of Siva daily with a club before taking his food. He resolutely carried out his vow for days together. One day he was tired and sat down for his food. He was reminded of his vow, so he got up immediately, made the effort though tired, of going to the Jyotirlinga and struck it with his club. Lord Siva came out of the Jyotirlinga and congratulated him stating that Brahmins had forgotten him while Baiju daily remembered him. The Lord satisfied the desires of Baiju and from that day the temple became known as the temple of Baijnath.

This temple is situated in a big compound of stone which looks like a fort. In the centre is the temple of Lord Baijnath facing east, and round about there are twenty-two other temples.

The top of the Siva Linga appears slightly broken as is recorded in the legend. Pilgrims take their bath in the Sivaganga Lake and worship Lord Siva. Many pilgrims bring water from Gangotri, the source of river Ganges, or from Prayaga and offer it to Lord Vaidyanath. The priests keep ready the Ganges water in small phials and sell it to the pilgrims who offer it to the Lord.

In the months of Magha and Phalguna, numerous pilgrims bring Ganges water on their shoulders and offer it to the Lord. The Sivaganga Lake or *kund* is situated to the north of the temple. Near the temple itself there is a well which is said to contain waters from all the rivers. It is said that by drinking the water of this lake one is cured of leprosy.

This district is full of jungles and there are numerous trees of Haritaki and Rudraksha. Many *sadhus* come here in search of various medicinal herbs. Many Bengalis come to this place to live in their retirement. A great fair is held here on the Sivaratri day.

Dr. Rajendralal Mitra rightly observes "that this place of great sanctity, highly eulogised in the puranas and strongly recommended as a place of pilgrimage, could not have remained in the form of a stump of 4″ on the bare earth in an open field for centuries, without a covering. During the Hindu period, after the downfall of Buddhism, some pilgrim or other would have soon provided it with a temple." He believes that one Puranamal referred to in the inscription could not have knocked down the old temple and erected a new one in its place. After interpreting the inscriptions Dr. Mitra concludes that two separate portions were constructed by Puranamal and Raghunatha respectively.

The well near the main entrance of the courtyard is known as Chandrakupa and it is stated to have been constructed by Ravana who brought there the waters of the sacred *tirthas*. The Sivaganga Lake 600 feet x 900 feet has an embankment and Dr. Rajendralal Mitra suggests "that this embankment must have beeen put up by Maharaja Mansingh, the great general of Akbar who came to this place on his way to Orissa, as I find his name is associated with the western portion which is called Mansarover."

The worship of this Jyotirlinga is very simple. Rich people even offer land to the Lord by writing out the donation on a Bilwa leaf with Kunkuma and placing it on the Lord; and even though the leaves and Kunkuma are washed away the next day, this title-deed or transfer-deed in the form of a Bilwa leaf is strictly and faithfully respected.

This Jyotirlinga is specially worshipped for the cure of diseases, for the birth of an offspring and for the curing of sick children. After taking a bath in the Sivaganga tank, the pilgrims lie down on the verandah performing a fast for three days and three nights. During that time the grace of the Lord is indicated to the pilgrim in a dream.

This Deogarh is known in old works as Vaidyanath, Haritaki Vana, Ketaki Vana, Ravana Vana, Chitabhoomi and Hardapeetha. In *Khulasatu-Tawarikh* written between 1695 and 1699, the following miracles about Vaidyanath are recorded. A person in need of money observes fast offering prayer to Lord Siva for three days; then a leaf is put forth by the holy pipal tree in the temple on which are written some words in Hindi which contain an order on some rich man for payment of a certain sum to the person who is praying. This leaf is brought before the high priest, who copies it on a piece of paper and gives it to the person who has prayed for it. This piece of paper is known as the hundi or cheque of Lord Vaidyanath. The man upon whom this cheque is drawn usually pays the money without trying to evade payment. It is further stated that the high priest enters into the cave once a year and brings out some earth. It is distributed to various ministers of the temple in small quantities; in the case of those who are faithful this earth turns into gold.

ज्योतिर्लिंगमिदं श्रेष्ठं दर्शनात् पूजनादपि ।
सर्वपापहरं दिव्यं भुक्तिवर्धनमुत्तमम् ॥

Kotirudra, 28-21.

"This best of the Jyotirlingas, which is divine, destroys all sins by its mere sight and worship. It is the best promoter of prosperity."

44. AMBARNATH

"In the Shaka Samvat 982 (1060 A.D.) *on Friday the 9th of the bright half of Shravan, the illustrious king Mahamandaleshvara Mamvanirajadeva is flourishing . . . All these together near Ambanath temple constructed a temple of God of the most illustrious Mahamandesvara Chitraraja in Patapalli restored by Bhagala.*

Inscription on the inside of the lintel over the north door of the hall at Ambarnath temple.

The Ambarnath temple is situated in the town of Ambarnath near Kalyan, in the Thana District. Ambarnath is a factory town. The temple of God Siva known as Ambarnath or Ambareshwar was constructed here in about the middle of the 11th century. It is situated on the left bank of a tributary of the Valdhan river and situated in a nice pretty valley. It is illustrative of the excellent and genuine Hindu architecture of the 11th century. Ambarnath is situated neither in the Deccan nor in Gujarat, but in Konkan which is the meeting place of both and it has been rightly observed that its architecture combines the influences both of the north and the south.

The temple is about four miles south-east of Kalyan and about a mile west of the Ambarnath station on the Central Railway in the Thana District. This ancient temple has become also a picnic place for the people of Bombay. The temple consists of a *garbagriha* and a *mandapa* with three porches in the north, south and west directions. The *garbagriha* faces west. The temple is made up of two squares, placed side by side. It has cut-corner domes and close-fitting mortarless stones, and is carved throughout with half-sized human figures, and with bands of tracery and belts of miniature elephants. On the east is a richly-carved and ornamented tower and spire and on the west of the spire is a *sabha mandapa* about 35 feet high, with a domed central roof and three porches.

The *shikhara* is in the northern style with four vertical and ornamented bands. There are ten standing pillars in the temple. Four principal pillars in the centre of the *mandapa* are exquisitely carved. Each of the porches has two pillars. The *mandapa* ceiling is full of nice designs. Most of the images on the outer side of the temple are *Saivite* images. There is an image of Mahisha Mardini in the *tribanga* dancing form. There is also an image of Kamadeva with eight hands (many of them being broken). An image of Hanuman is shown carrying a mountain on his head.

In the centre of the floor of the shrine is a self-made or *swayambhu* linga of Lord Siva, about 2′ 4″ in girth and rising about 4″ above the level of the floor. It is worshipped as the Ambareshwar Mahadev. On the Maha Shivratri day, in the month of Magha, a fair is held and pilgrims from Kalyan and Bombay visit the shrine.

The original enclosure around the temple measures about 150′ from east to west and 105′ from north to south. The temple itself has been found to measure 89′×73½′. Near the temple on the south-west side is a small tank. The temple faces the west. Even though apparently the plan of the temple seems made up of two squares placed near each other diagonally, in reality it is found that the two squares touch side to side and the touching sides are narrowed down. It is surmised that the original shrine was on the same level as the hall, but the fall of the *shikhara* crushed down through its floor and destroyed it. The Siva-linga is of a natural rock, and

Cousins compares it with the celebrated Jyotirlinga of Omkara at Mandhata on the Narmada in the Central Provinces. The pillars exhibit a variety of designs, those in the centre being particularly richly carved. The ceiling panels are considered to be some of the best works of the 11th century. The outer walls or Mandovara have various figure-panels. The temple is surrounded by a court-yard containing a smaller building now in ruins. Half of the tower of the temple has fallen. In front of the west entrance, there was a *Nandin* but now the original *Nandin* has gone.

There is an inscription inside the lintel of the north door. It says that in the Saka Samvat 982 *i.e.* 1060 A.D. the temple of Sri Ambarnath was built or rebuilt during the reign of the illustrious Mahamandaleshvara Mamvanirajadeva at a time when several other ministers mentioned in the inscription were in power. Some scholars take the view after reading the inscription that the temple was built in 860 A.D., while the more accepted view is that it was built in 1060 A.D.. It is also believed that the temple was not rebuilt in that year but that it was constructed for the first time in 1060 A.D.. Mamvani or Mummuni, referred to in the inscription, was one of the Shilahara Mahamandaleshvaras of the northern Konkan.

The Shilaharas were the local overlords of the Konkan. During the 8th and 9th centuries they had paid obeisance to the Rashtrakutas of Malkhet. Thereafter the Shilahara rulers were under the overlordship of Gujarat. Cousins notes that the capital of the Shilahara Mahamandaleshvaras of northern Konkan was at Puri, which was possibly situated on the Salsette island near the Kondivte caves and 5 or 6 miles south of Kanheri caves, where in spite of the depredations and appropriations of the

Portuguese and the Mohammadans before them, there are still a few remains of the Hindu period both above and below the ground. The family of the Shilaharas had three branches; one ruling over north Konkan, the other over the south Konkan and the third over the district of Karad and Kolhapur. The Shilahara princes of north Konkan were first the vassals of Rashtrakutas and then of Chalukyas. These Shilaharas carried the *suvarna garudadwaja.* It is also on their copper-plate-grants. Shilahara princes trace their origin from Vidyadhara Jimutavahana who went to the extent of offering his own life in order to rescue a Naga chief from *garuda.*

In the Sanskrit drama of Sri Harsha, called *Naga-nanda,* this legend of Jimutavahana rescuing the Naga chief is dramatised. The drama also enunciates and eulogises the Buddhist doctrine of *Ahimsa.* In one of the Kanheri cave inscriptions of the Shilaharas dated 842 A.D. there is a record of a grant to the Buddhist community.

Regarding the capital of the Shilaharas of north Konkan, Cousins mentions several possible sites like Thana, Kalyan, Supara, Chaul, Mangalapuri in the Salsette island, Rajapuri in the old Janjira State and Gharapuri in the Elephanta island. Rejecting all of them, he prefers the site which is in the middle of the Salsette island. It is about a mile north of the Marol village and is bounded by the Salsette hills on the north, having Kondivte caves. It has been observed that in this place there are some vestiges of a Hindu temple of the 14th and 15th centuries. Cousins suggests that this site was almost wiped clean by the Portuguese who found in the ruins of the old temples abundant material with which to erect their numerous churches and convents, which themselves in turn are now in ruins or have disappeared altogether.

The architecture of this temple is not a development of the Dravidian style, nor is it completely Chalukyan. Dr. Sankalia has observed that it is a harmonious blending of the fashions prevalent to its north and those already existing in the country. He has distinguished the Ambarnath temple from the Chalukyan type at Aihole. The Shikhara form of the temples of Chalukyas of northern Gujarat also differs from that of Ambarnath. Two of the Malva temples, one of Siddanath at Nemavar and the other of Nilakantheshwara at Un, have been compared with the Ambarnath temple. So also has the Kajuraho temple of Kandarya Mahadeva. Dr. Sankalia concludes that the Siddanath temple at Nemavar, about a century older than the temple of Ambarnath, might have been an immediate source of inspiration to the Shilaharas and the Yadavas, whose temples had survived at Ambarnath in Konkan and at Sinnar, Balsane and other places in the Deccan.

This temple of the 11th century is one of the earliest temples in which are fused prominent features of the temple architecture of different parts of India. The Shikhara is curvilinear and is of the northern type. There are numerous images exquisitely sculptured. The shrine is star-shaped. Among the sculptures there are certain masterpieces like the figures of Mahisha Mardini, Gajaha Murti of Lord Shiva, Durga, Kamadeva, Mohini and a few others. On the north side of the principal niche there is an image of Maha Kali, while below her, in the basement niche is an image of Brahma with his wife upon his knee. The central niche on the south side has Siva in his Tandava pose.

Thus, the Ambarnath temple has been rightly described as a solitary and superb example of the Shilahara temple of North Konkan.

45. SARNATH

सब्बपापस्स अकरणं कुसलस्स उपसम्पदा ।
सचित्तपरियोदपनं एतं बुद्धान सासनं ॥

—*Dhammapada, Buddavagga* 5.

"*Abstention from all evil, performance of good acts, and purification of one's mind—this is the doctrine of the Buddhas.*"

"There are two extremes, O monks, from which he who leads a religious life must abstain. What are those two extremes? One is a life of pleasure, devoted to desire and enjoyment; that is base, ignoble, unspiritual, unworthy, unreal; the other is a life of mortification; it is gloomy, unworthy, unreal. The Perfect One, O monks, is removed from both these extremes and has discovered the way which lies between them, the middle way which enlightens the eyes, enlightens the mind, which leads to rest. to knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nirvan*. And what O monks, is this middle way which the Perfect One has discovered? It is the sacred eightfold path as it is called —right faith, right resolve, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right thought, right self-concentration. This, O monks, is the middle way, which the Perfect One has discovered."

—*Mahavagga, reciting the first sermon of Buddha at Isipatan or Sarnath.*

Sarnath is situated about 4 miles north of Kashi near the high road to Ghazipur. If one starts from the Panch Ganga ghat of Varanasi (Kashi), one comes to Sarnath via Lat-Bairav, river Barna and then the high road to

Ghazipur. There is also a railway station at Sarnath, from which the ancient remains of Sarnath are at a distance of about one mile. But as there are few conveniences of conveyance and accommodation at Sarnath proper, visits to Sarnath are usually arranged from Varanasi.

This ancient place of Sarnath is referred to in Buddhist texts as Rishipatan or Isipatan and Mrigadava. After his enlightenment at Buddha Gaya, Buddha pondered over as to whom he should first proclaim his doctrine. He first thought of proclaiming his doctrine to his old teachers, Alara Kalama and Udraka, but he soon found out that they were dead and so he decided to preach his newly acquired knowledge to his erstwhile companions who attended on him at Uruvela and had subsequently left him and proceeded to Mrigadava or Isipatan near Varanasi. He, therefore, came down from Uruvela to Varanasi and at Isipatan he met the five monks to whom he gave his first sermon called the *Dharmachakra Pravartana Sutra*, which embodies the fundamentals of Buddhism. These five Brahmins who were his first pupils were Kaundinga (Kondanna), Vashpa (Vappa), Bhadrika (Bhaddiya), Mahanaman (Mahanama) and Asvajit (Assaji).

There are four principal places of pilgrimage for Buddhists. One is the birthplace of Buddha in Lumbinivana, now called Rummindei (a corruption of Lumbini Devi), about 10 miles to the east of Kapilavastu. Buddha was born under a Sal tree in this Lumbini garden when Maya Devi, his mother, was travelling from Kapilavastu to Koli. Regarding the birth date of Buddha, there are two views. Prof. Max Muller and others state that he was born in 557 B.C., when King Bimbisara of the Sishunaga dynasty was ruling in Magadha. The other view is held by Prof. Lassen and it has the support of the Ceylonese chronology, and this is also the more accepted view.

According to this, the Buddha was born in 623 B.C. and he died in 543 B.C.. 2500 years after the death of the Buddha would, according to this view, be completed in 1957 A.D..

The second most sacred place of Buddhist pilgrimage is Buddha Gaya where the Buddha had his enlightenment. The third sacred place is Sarnath or Isipatan where Buddha preached Law for the first time. The fourth sacred place is at Kushinara or Kashia in the Gorakhpur district, where Buddha gave up his body.

Buddha had his enlightenment at the age of 35 and he lived for 80 years. His first preaching at Sarnath or Isipatan took place in 588 B.C.. Immediately after his preaching it is possible that this Isipatan or Mrigadava came to be considered a sacred place. No remains are available of the first 300 years after Buddha's first preaching here. The earliest Buddhistic remains which are at present available are of the Maurya period. Emperor Asoka had constructed numerous *stupas* over the last remains of Buddha which he had recovered from eight ancient *stupas*. According to tradition, Asoka constructed 84,000 *stupas*. Even now the *stupa* constructed by Asoka and the Asoka pillar at Sarnath testify to the ancient glory of this place. The inscription on the Asoka pillar is still intact. It says: "The *sangha* or the order of the clergy shall not be divided by anyone. If any monk or nun divides the *sangha*, he or she shall be compelled to put on a white garment and to live in a solitary place." This inscription was for nuns residing at Mrigadava and warns them under penalty of dismissal from the *sangha* and solitary confinement not to create any division in the Sangha.

Two Chinese pilgrims, Fa Hien and Hiuen-Tsang, have thrown considerable light on the conditions of Sarnath or

Mrigadava during the later period of Buddhism. Fa Hien visited India in the 5th Century A.D. and Hiuen-Tsang in the middle of the 7th Century A.D. Both of them have left detailed records of their travels in India. Their accounts of Sarnath and Varanasi are sufficiently long and are substantially correct. The account given by Hiuen-Tsang is in greater detail. Fa Hien says that "to the north-west of the town of Varanasi at a distance of ten li (about less than 2 miles), you come to the temple of the Immortal situated in the Deer Park." He also mentions another small shrine, four towers and two monasteries, at Sarnath.

Hiuen-Tsang says that the kingdom of Varanasi was 4,000 li or 667 miles in circumference. It had 30 Buddhist monasteries to which were attached 3,000 monks. There were a 100 Hindu temples with about 10,000 priests and devotees connected with them. In the days of Hiuen-Tsang, the greater portion of the population followed the Hindu doctrines. In the city of Varanasi, Hiuen-Tsang saw a brazen statue of Maheswara about a 100 feet high. To the north-east of Varanasi and to the west of the Ganga he notes that there was a *stupa* built by Asoka, about a 100 feet in height and opposite to it was a stone column as bright as a mirror. About 10 li (less than 2 miles) to the north-east of Ganga was a monastery of the Deer Park, now called Sarnath, divided into eight parts and entirely surrounded by a wall. In it there was a *vihara*, 200 feet high, surmounted by a huge mango embossed in gold Around this monument there were a hundred rows of niches each containing a statue of the Buddha in embossed gold. In the midst of the *vihara* there was a huge statue of the Buddha in bronze. To the south-west of this *vihara* was a stupa of stone raised by Asoka, and in front of it there was a column 70 feet high erected on the spot where

Buddha delivered his first discourse. Nearby there were 7 other *stupas* and a number of ancient stone seats to commemorate the site where the four last Buddhas are said to have taken exercise.

Within the walls of the monastery there were a number of *viharas* and *stupas* as well as numerous sacred monuments. To the west of the walls there was a sacred tank in which Buddha formerly bathed. A little further west there was another tank in which Buddha washed his monks' water-pot. A little to the north was the third tank in which he washed his garments. On one side of this last tank there was a large square stone on which there were marks of the threads of the Kashaya or the brown garment worn by Buddha. Near that was a *stupa* and further on was another *stupa* situated in the midst of a large forest. About half a mile south of this monastery was a large and lofty *stupa* about 300 feet in height, with rare and precious objects, surmounted by an arrow.

Both Fa Hien and Hiuen-Tsang agree that *stupas* had been erected where Buddha delivered his first discourse and where the five hermits came forward and paid him reverence. Hiuen-Tsang says that the tower or *stupa* which existed in his day was built by Asoka. It commemorated one of the most important events in the history of Buddhism and was regarded as one of the eight divine towers.

Regarding the Asoka Pillar found at Sarnath, it is universally acknowledged that it has a special place in ancient Indian Art. The polish and glaze on the pillar is extraordinary. It is stated that the art of giving such glaze and polish disappeared from India after the first Century B.C.. The original pillar is stated to be about 50 feet high and made of one stone.

Thus, the earliest remains at Sarnath are of the

Mauryan period, and some of them are ascribed to Emperor Asoka. The most well-known of the remains of Asoka's period is the Lion Capital which is now the national emblem of India. The other monument of the time of Asoka is the portion of the Dharmarajika *stupa*. This *stupa* is believed to have been enlarged and expanded several times from the Kushana period up to the 12th Century A.D.. Another outstanding monument of the Kushana period is a large statue of standing Buddha which originally had an inscribed umbrella over it. There are several statues with inscriptions of the Gupta age.

From some inscriptions it is understood that after 300 A.D. Sarnath was in the possession of the monks belonging to the Sarvastivada branch of the Hina Yana of Buddhism. Before that it was with some other branch. In the 4th Century A.D. the Sammitiya branch of the Vastuputrika Sampradaya was in power here. In the 7th Century when Hiuen-Tsang visited the place, these Sammitiya Buddhists were in power. From the time of Hiuen-Tsang right up to the 12th Century these Buddhist remains at Sarnath were repeatedly repaired and extended.

It is clear that after the 12th Century the shrines and *stupas* of Sarnath were in ruins. It was at one time believed that the Hindus of Varanasi destroyed the Buddhist shrines and stupas, but this false view has now been corrected and given up. In the *Report of the Archæological Survey of India, Vol. VIII,* on page 16, General Cunningham observes that certainly at this period there was no great ill-feeling between Brahmins and Buddhists, and though a great deal has been said recently regarding this supposed ill-feeling, "I desire to point out that the very fact of victuals, ready dressed and uneaten, found in the Sarnath ruins is the strongest proof that the attack on the monasteries was most sudden and I submit that an attack of such a sudden nature could not have been planned by the Brahmins of the place. Buddhist monasteries are well-known to contain usually several hundreds of monks and such a monastery as that at Sarnath was least likely to have the fewest number of occupants. To attack and burn it successfully would need a large force well armed, and it will be no easy task for a mob suddenly roused, as in popular tumults, to attack and sack the great monastery. We must therefore look to other agents for the destruction of those monasteries.''

He then quotes Elliot's *India, Vol. II, p.* 113 describing the exploits of Mahammad Nialtigin, General of Masaud, and how he sacked the city of Varanasi. This happened in 1033 A.D.. It also appears that even in 1017 A.D. when Varanasi was plundered by Mahammad of Gazni who destroyed part of Sarnath.

In the 12th Century Queen Kumara Devi of King Govinda Chandra of the Gahadavala dynasty of Kanauj (1114 to 1154 A.D.), constructed a great vihar called Dharmachakra Vihar at this place. In course of time Sarnath had also become a holy place of pilgrimage for Hindus and Jains who had both constructed numerous structures and statues at this place. In 1194 A.D. Kutb-ud-din destroyed hundreds of holy places, including Varanasi and Sarnath, after which time Buddhism as a separate and organised faith ceased to exist in India, and the relics at Sarnath remained unrepaired, and a part of those remained buried with dust and earth. During the earlier centuries Hinduism had already absorbed some of the best points developed or emphasised by Buddhism and worthy of being absorbed, particularly in the spheres of ethics, logic, religion, metaphysics and philosophy and in matters of Indian thought and culture in general. During the last 125 years on account of the consistent efforts of the Archæologists the ruins at Sarnath have come to light once again.

The excavations at Sarnath were carried on in the earlier stages in a very sporadic manner and by too many people. General Cunningham also carried out his excavations. He believes that the name Sarnath has come from Saranganath who was the king of Deer and a Bodhi Sattva. Lord Shiva is also known as Saranga and at a distance of about half a mile from the Buddhist remains at Sarnath there is a Saiva temple of Saranganath.

Jagat Sinha was the Dewan of Raja Chait Sinha of Banaras. This Jagat Sinha had several shops at Jagat Ganj. In 1794 A.D. the workmen employed by Jagat Sinha were carrying away stones from the Buddhist remains at Sarnath in order to construct shops in Jagat Ganj. These stones attracted the attention of a European scholar to the antiquity of Sarnath. In 1815 Colonel Mackenzie did some excavations, and presented the Buddhist images he recovered to the Asiatic Society of Bengal. In 1835 General Cunningham did his excavations. The images which he presented to the Calcutta museum are intact, but those which he left behind at Sarnath, including some fine sculptures, were mostly utilised in building a bridge on the river Varna; and for the construction of another bridge, about 60 cartloads of these precious relics were utilised. In spite of this there are a sufficient number of ancient remains still extant at Sarnath to give an idea of this ancient sacred place. From 1904 A.D. onwards there have been systematic excavations by the Archæological Survey of India and much of this ancient town of *stupas* and monasteries has been brought to light.

Regarding the ancient name of Richipatana or Mrigadava Mahavastu, a Sanskrit Buddhist work relates as follows: "Once there lived 500 Pratyeka Buddhas or Rishis in a big forest at a distance of 1½ *yojanas* from Banaras. They once rose to the sky where they attained Nirvana and so their corporeal frames fell down to the earth. As the bodies of these Rishis fell in the forest, it came to be known as Rishipatan, that is, the place where the bodies of the Rishis fell down." Fa Hien records that a Pratyeka Buddha was living in this forest and on hearing of the coming enlightenment of Gautama Buddha, he attained *Pari Nirvana.* In *Mahavatthu, Nigrodhamiga Jataka,* the following legend is given for the name Mrigadava. Buddha in one of his former births was the king of deer and resided in this forest near Varanasi. The King of Varanasi was fond of hunting. As he was hunting indiscriminately this Bodhi Sattva, king of the deer, came to terms with the king of Varanasi, who agreed to accept one deer per day for his food as sent to him by the king of the deer. One day it was the turn of a pregnant she-deer. The merciful Bodhi Sattva, the king of deer, could not see the prospect of the innocent *foetus* being destroyed along with its mother and so offered himself as food to the king of Varanasi. The latter was struck by the merciful attitude of this Bodhi Sattva, king of the deer, and gave up the *himsa* of deer altogether.

The Chaukhandi *stupa* is a lofty brick structure crowned with an octagonal tower. General Cunningham drove a vertical shaft through its centre down to its foundation, but he could not discover anything. This *stupa* is said to have been erected on the spot where Gautama Buddha met the first time his five disciples. The tower on this *stupa* was constructed to commemorate a visit paid by Humayun to this place. There are Persian verses engraved on a slab of stone stating that "King Jannab Ashiyani Humayun, the ruler of seven climes, came one day and sat on the throne rendering the spot thereby like the rising place of the resplendent sun; therefore it came to the mind of this humble creature Goverdhan, a house-born slave of King Akbar, to erect as a sacred memorial, a magnificent dome resembling the blue firmament. The year was 996 when this elegant edifice was constructed.''

As has been observed earlier, it was from the Dharmarajika *stupa* that the workmen of Babu Jagat Singh carried away stones in 1794 A.D.. The original marble casket in this *stupa* had disappeared, but its outer sandstone case is in the Calcutta museum. Major Kittoe recovered from the house of Babu Jagat Sinh an inscribed Pedestal or Padma peetha. Sir John Marshall conducted several operations in 1907-8 which reveal a history of successive repairs and rebuilding carried out here at different periods. This *stupa* was originally constructed by Asoka. The first enlargement was in the Kushana period, the second in the fifth or sixth century, the third in the seventh and the next two in the 9th and 10th centuries. The last enlargement was by Kumara Devi when she built in the 12th century the Dharmachakra vihar, a little north of this place.

About 20 yards from this Dharmarajika *stupa* is a ruined temple and from the description of Hiuen-Tsang it appears that this was the *Mulagandhakuti* or the main shrine, about 200 feet high, and surmounted by a golden *amra* fruit. To the west of this main shrine of *Mulagandhakuti* are the fragments of the Asoka pillar. Its capital and a few pieces of the crowning wheel are in the central hall of the museum. Hiuen-Tsang states that the pillar was 70 feet high. This monolythic pillar is cut out of a single block of sandstone.

The Dhamekh *stupa* is situated to the north-east of the Jain temple. It is a solid cylindrical tower 93 feet in diameter at the base, and is 143 feet high. The stones in each layer were bound together by means of iron clamps. The *stupa* has eight projecting faces with several niches. They were originally adorned with floral designs and geometrical patterns. The decoration is highly graceful and shows the highly developed Gupta art. Dhamekh is Dharmeksha, which means the beholding of the Dharma, which was first preached by Buddha at Mrigadava to his first five disciples. General Cunningham drove a vertical shaft through the centre of this *stupa* right up to its foundation in order to discover a relic chamber, and he found 3 feet from the top an inscribed slab containing the well-known formula of the Buddhist creed written in characters of the 6th or 7th century A.D.. This slab is now in the Indian Museum. It is believed to have been placed at some later date in this *stupa.* This Dhamekh *stupa* was the place where Buddha first turned the wheel of law, and at the Chukhandi *stupa* Buddha after his arrival at Sarnath met his first five disciples. The Dhamekh *stupa* was originally built by Asoka.

To the north of Dhamekh *stupa* are ruins of a stupa where Buddha predicted the future Buddha Maitreya.

A new temple of Buddha has been constructed at Sarnath, and Buddhists from all over the world have paid homage to it. Sarnath is once again regaining its ancient glory as a sacred place of pilgrimage. On May 24, 1956, Bharat celebrated the 2,500th *Pari Nirvana* Anniversary of Buddha. This Buddha Jayanti was celebrated with great enthusiasm all over India and particularly at Sarnath, Buddha Gaya, Sanchi, Nalanda, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Delhi, Lucknow, Bhopal, etc.. Other countries like Ceylon, Burma, China, Japan, Nepal, Tibet, Laos, Cambodia, Sikkim, Bhutan, Indonesia and others also celebrated this Buddha Jayanti on a large and dignified scale..

In Sarnath we can find some of the best specimens of the art of the Maurya period, the Khushana period and the Gupta period. Some of the exhibits are exceedingly artistic. Images of Buddha of the Gupta period are extraordinarily graceful.

So Buddha turned the wheel of law for the first time at Sarnath and became the Dharmachakravartin or the religious monarch. Buddha in his Dharmachakra *mudra* is seated cross-legged and expounds the law in the midst of the Pancha Bhadda-Vaggiyas or the five monks who were his first disciples. In front of Buddha's throne is the wheel which symbolises his first sermon and the deer reclining on either side of this wheel suggests that it was at Mrigadava that Buddha gave his doctrine for the first time to the world.

Buddha reached the ripe age of 80 years. Immediately before his death he went from Rajagriha northwards. He came to Pataliputra which was then under construction. Buddha foretold its coming greatness. He came to Vesali and dismissed his disciples in order to lead a solitary life. He then reached Beluva.

At Beluva he was seriously ill. He thought of his disciples and desired to address them. He therefore conquered his illness and held fast to life within himself. He sat in the shade of the house and conversed with the worthy Ananda.

He said to Ananda:

"*The Perfect One, O Ananda, does not say I will rule over the Church or let the Church be subject to me. What shall the Perfect One declare, Ananda, to be his purpose regarding the Church? I am now frail, Ananda, I am aged, I am an old man, who has finished his pilgrimage and reached old age; eighty years old am I. Be ye to yourselves, Ananda, your own light, your own refuge;*

seek no other refuge. Let the truth be your light and your refuge; seek no other refuge. Whosoever now, Ananda, or after my departure, shall be his own light, his own refuge and shall seek no other refuge, whosoever taketh the truth as his light, and his refuge and shall seek no other refuge, such will henceforth, Ananda, be my true disciple, who walks in the right path."

46. CHITOR

तालमें भोपाल ताल और सब तलैयां हैं ।
गढ़ में चितोड़गढ और सब गढैयां हैं ।।

"The only lake is the Bhopal lake; all others are miniature lakes; Chitor is the only fort, all others are miniature forts."

Chitor is the headquarters of the Chitor District in the old Udaipur State of Rajasthan. It is situated 24° 53′ North and 74° 39′ East. It is about two miles away from the Chitor railway station. Near it there is the famous fort of Chitor. To the west of it flows the Gambhir river, on which there is a bridge of 10 arches constructed in the 14th Century. It is difficult to say who built the fort of Chitor. Legend says that it was constructed by Pandavas. It is also said that this famous fort was originally known as Chitrakot.

The State of Udaipur has been called Mewar, which is the corruption of the Sanskrit word Medapatta or the country of the Medas. The ruling dynasty of Mewar claimed its descent from Kusa, the eldest son of Rama. Their courage, war-like habits and aristocratic dignity have given them a distinguished place among the Kshatriyas of India. They head the list of the 36 Rajput clans. They gave the most stubborn and prolonged resistance to the Mohammadans. They were proud and did not give their daughters in marriage to Mohammadan emperors and for a long time they stopped intermarriage with such of the Rajput families who formed such matrimonial alliances with the Mohammadan rulers.

Sri Rama is considered to be the 64th descendant of Vivaswan or the Sun. Kusa was the elder son of Rama.

The 60th descendant of Kusa was Sumitra who is said to have been the contemporary of King Vikramaditya in 57 B.C.. Several generations after Sumitra, Kankasena, a descendant of the Solar race, is said to have migrated to Saurashtra and founded the kingdom of Valabhi. Including him there were nineteen rulers in his line who ruled over Valabhi, the last of them being Shiladitya VI who ruled in about 766 A.D.. In the meantime, in about the 6th Century, a member of this family ruling over Valabhi, established for himself a rulership in Idar, south of Mewar. He was Gohil or Gohaditya and his descendants are known as Gohelotes. A few generations after Gohil, flourished Bappa who had his capital at Nagda. This Bappa captured the fort of Chitor from Raja Mansingh of the Mori or Maurya clan of Rajputs. Mansingh was ousted in 734 A.D. and Bappa who established himself at Chitor assumed the title of Raval. From 734 A.D. till 1567 A.D. Chitor remained the capital of the rulers of Mewar.

The rulers of Mewar are called Ranas and the Hinduka Suraj or the Sun of Hindus. Their motto is: जो दढ़ राखै धर्मको तिहि राखै किरतार । —which means, "God Almighty, the Creator, is always on the side of those who cling fast and unflinchingly to their faith and duty."

Bappa Raval was a great devotee of God Ekalingaji Mahadeva who was then worshipped by Harita Rishi. This sage blessed Bappa Raval who was his disciple. As a matter of fact, Sri Ekalingaji was worshipped by Bappa and his successors, as the real Ruler of Mewar, and Bappa and his successors described themselves only as the Regents of Sri Ekalingaji Mahadeva or Ekalingaji-ka-Diwan. Col. Todd believes that the Gohelote dynasty of Bappa Raval was founded in Chitor in 728 A.D.

In the reign of Khuman II, Chitor was attacked by a great army of Muslims, but was bravely and triumphantly defended; it was at the time when Al Mamoon deposed his brother and he himself became Khalifa. Shamsuddin invaded Rajasthan and Sind, but Jaitra Singh, the brave Prince of Mewar, defeated him in a battle near Nagda, some time between 1222 and 1229 A.D. Tej Singh and Samar Singh were the successors of Jaitra Singh. The younger son of Samar Singh was Karan Singh who retired from Chitor after its sack by Allauddin Khilji and he established himself in Nepal. The present rulers of Nepal are descended from him.

The *Ekalinga Mahatmya* found by Pandit Gauri Shankar was written at the time af Rana Kumbha and it throws a good deal of light on the history of Mewar.

Chitor was invaded by Mohammadans four times; in 1303 A.D. by Allauddin Khilji; in the fourteenth century by Mohammad Tughlak (but unsuccessfully); in 1534 A.D. by King Bahadurshah of Gujarat and in 1567 A.D by Emperor Akbar.

Allauddin Khilji besieged Chitor in 1303 A.D., when Rana Laxman Singh came to the assistance of his relative Raval Ratan Singh who ruled Mewar. In this siege, which lasted for six months, both of them were killed. Queen Padmini was the lovely and accomplished wife of Raval Ratan Singh, the ruler of Mewar. She was the Chawhan princess of incomparable beauty and was the chief cause of the invasion of Chitor by Allauddin Khilji. Ratan Singh, who was carried off by the enemy, was later released by the arrangement of a trap by Padmini. The Sultan again resumed the siege and finally succeeded in establishing his foothold in the fort of Chitor. Rajputs defended the fort bravely. Ratan Singh was slain. Seven out of the eight sons of Rana Laxman Singh were crowned rulers one after the other, each for a day, and they joyfully sacrificed their lives and gave their royal blood while fighting.

The eighth son, Ajai Singh, retired to Kelwara in the heart of Aravallis. The Rajputs then prepared for *Kesaria* and death. The *Johar* sacrifice was decided upon by the females to preserve their purity. The great funeral fire was lighted within the subterranean passage wherein all the daughters and wives of the Rajputs along with Queen Padmini burned themselves to ashes, and the doors of this subterranean passage were closed with stone walls.

After this, the brave Rana and his followers opened the gate of the fort, rushing out towards the invading army, spreading death and meeting death. The Muslims ultimately entered the fort, which was all deserted and full of smoke. Khilji was in a great rage and he ordered the slaughter of 30,000 Hindus, and did all he could to destroy the fort. He left the fort in charge of Khijarkhan. After a time, the fort was placed in charge of Maldev, the Sonigara Chief of Jhalore.

Hamir, the grandson of Rana Laxman Singh of Sisoda and son of Ari Singh, recovered the Fort of Chitor from Jaisa or Jai Singh, son of Maldev. This Jaisa sought the protection of Mohammad Tughlak, the sovereign of Delhi, who came down with a large army to attack Chitor, but was defeated and taken prisoner at Singoli. He was not set free until he had offered a large ransom of rupees 50 lakhs, one hundred elephants and had also ceded several districts.

During the next century and a half after Hamir, Mewar enjoyed great prosperity and repose. Rana Lakha Singh (1382-1397 A.D.) had several sons, Chonda being the eldest and also the heir. The Rathor Rao of Mandor offered Mewar his daughter's hand in marriage. She, however, was intended for Chonda who was absent and his father Rana Lakha jokingly remarked that the offer could not be for an old man like himself. On hearing this, Chonda declined to have the girl in marriage and ultimately Rana Lakha married her. It was agreed that her issue would become the Rana. Prince Mokal was born to her and Chonda resigned his birthright to be the Rana in favour of Mokal. In recognition of this great sacrifice, the descendants of Chonda held first place in the councils of the State and on all deeds of grant, etc., their symbol, the lance, was placed in addition to that of the Rana. They were the Rowats of Salumbar and are called Chondavats.

Rana Mokal was succeeded by his son Kumbha who was then a minor. Kumbha's rule was a great success. He defeated Mohammad Khilji of Malwa and kept him prisoner at Chitor for six months. In commemoration of this and other victories, Rana Kumbha erected a *jayastambha* or the Pillar of Triumph. Kumbha also defeated Kutub-ud-din of Gujarat and the Muslim governor of Nagaur in Marwar. Rana Kumbha's generosity has been specially referred to by Abul Fazal. Col. Todd has described the Rajput temperament as a mixture of arrogance, political blindness, pride and generosity very often carried to extremes. The *jayastambha* of Rana Kumbha was completed after ten years. Kumbha reigned for 35 years. He repaired the fort of Chitor and constructed seven defensive gates. He also constructed the temples of Kumbhaswami and Adivaraha, both having several water reservoirs. Before Rana Kumbha, his ancestor Rana Hamir had constructed in Chitor the temple of Goddess Annapurna, with a gold Stupa on the top and a reservoir nearby. This temple is mentioned in an inscription in Mokalji's temple dated 1429 A.D.. Rana Kumbha was himself a great poet and was also the author of four books on *Sangeeta Sastra* or music. He built the fort of Kumbhalgarh. Rana Kumbha was assassinated by his elder son Udaisingh who, being highly detested, could rule only for five years and was expelled by his younger brother Raimal. Udaisingh went to the King of Malwa for help and humbled himself by promising a daughter in marriage to the King of Delhi. But scarcely had he left the Dewan Khana or consultation hall of the Sultan when he was struck by lightning: "Heaven manifested its vengeance to prevent this additional iniquity and preserve the house of Bappa Raval from dishonour." He was killed by lightning.

During the time of Rana Raimal (1473 to 1508 A.D.) Ghiyas-ud-din of Malwa, who invaded Mewar, was defeated and was later taken prisoner by Prithviraj, the eldest son of the Rana. Next came the famous Rana Sanga in whose days Mewar was at the top of its prosperity and its revenue was ten crores. Rana Sanga had successfully fought eighteen battles with the rulers of Delhi and Malwa and on one occasion, in 1519 A.D., had even released Mahmud II of Malwa without any ransom, for which act he was praised even by Muslim historians. He took the Forts of Ranthambhor and Khandhar. But Babar defeated Ibrahim Lodi and then turned to the Rana in February 1527 A.D. Babar's advance forces were cut to pieces by the Rana. Babar then took a vow never to drink wine. In the final engagement near Khanua on the 12th March 1527 A.D., the Rajputs were defeated. The Rana was wounded, with 80 wounds on his body. He was taken to the village of Baswa where he died after a year.

Bhojraj, the eldest son of Rana Sanga, had predeceased his father Sanga. Bhojraj had married the famous Meerabai, the authoress of sweet odes and hymns to Lord Krishna. His younger brother who became the Rana, disliked her way of worshipping the Lord and treated her badly. She came to Dwaraka and died at the feet of the Lord in 1546 A.D.

After Sanga and his son Ratan Singh II came Vikramaditya, another son of Sanga. In his time, King Bahadurshah of Gujarat invaded Mewar and sacked Chitor in 1534 A.D.. In spite of its gallant defence, particularly by the Rathor Queen-mother, the fort fell. There was again the Johar where the females burnt themselves and males rushed forth desperately spreading death in the enemy ranks and ultimately getting destroyed. When Humayun marched against Bahadurshah, Chitor was regained by Vikramaditya. He was succeeded for two years by Banbir and then by Rana Udaisingh.

Udaisingh was the Rana from 1537 to 1572 A.D. He founded Udaipur in 1559 A.D. and eight years after that Emperor Akbar attacked Chitor in 1567 A.D. The siege lasted for four months. The fateful Johar was again resorted to; the Rajputs took their Beeras, had Kesari garments and rushed out to destruction. Many heroic and gallant deeds by males and females were recorded. Jaimal and Patta showed extraordinary valour and even Akbar recognised it by placing their stone effigies on carved elephants at the main gate of the Delhi Fort. The final sack of Chitor was on the 25th February 1568 A.D. Udaisingh died in 1572 A.D. He had proclaimed his favourite son Jagmal as his successor, but the nobles removed Jagmal and placed Pratap, the eldest son of Udaisingh, as the Rana on the Gadi of Mewar.

Rana Pratap was the embodiment of noble valour and courage. He was very keen on getting the power of his house restored, and on recovering the fort of Chitor. He is referred to by Muslim historians as Rana Kika. He had to fight not only against a great and powerful emperor like Akbar but also against his own people, the Rajput chiefs, who had been won over by Akbar. But Pratap firmly faced the situation.

In 1576 A.D. Akbar sent an expedition against Rana Pratap under Raja Man of Amber, and a desperate battle was fought at Haldighat near Gogunda. While Rana Pratap was seriously wounded, the Jhala Chief Mansingh demonstrated his singular fidelity to the Rana by taking upon himself the insignia of Mewar, invited death for himself and thus protected his master. The tide of war swayed from one side to the other. Numerous Rajput and Muslim soldiers laid down their lives, and the battle of Haldighat fought in June 1576 A.D. became memorable in history. Pratap died in 1597 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Amarsingh I. He fought Jehangir who had sent Khurram to lead the army. Amarsingh made peace with Khurram, and Jehangir treated his son Karansingh with generosity. Chitor was restored to Sisodias.

Legend says that Bhima, the second Pandava, came here in search of the philosopher's stone, and met a yogi at Gau Mukh and a *yati* at Kukreshwar. The water reservoirs of Bhimlat and Bhimgodi are named after this Bhima. The Linga of Lord Siva placed by Bhimsen is known as Nilkantha Mahadeva.

The Fort of Chitor lies north and south and is about 500′ above the plain surrounding it. It is about 3½ miles long and half a mile broad. In the fort there is a village and a new palace built by Maharana Sir Fatesingh. In addition, there are numerous old buildings and structures. The modern town of Chitor lies at the foot of the hill and is called Taleiti or the lower town of Chitor. Passing through the town one comes to the tank known as Jhali Vav built at the instance of the wife of Rana Udaisingh. Here can be seen seven magnificent gateways. These are the Padalpol, Bhairavpol, Hanumanpol, Ganeshpol, Jorlapol, Laxmanpol and Rampol. The last one is the main gate. The gate of the eastern side is known as Surajpol. In the North there is another gate known as Lakhotabari. On the northern route there is an excellent temple of Tulaja Bhavani constructed in the 16th century by Banvir who usurped the Gadi of Mewar.

To the South is Navlakha Bhandar or the 9-lakh treasury. Nearby there is the temple, Singar Chouri. It is delightfully graceful and elaborately carved and has several inscriptions. It was built in 1448 A.D. by Bhandari Bela, the son of the treasurer of Rana Kumbha, and it was dedicated to Santinath. Opposite this is the palace of the Ranas, called Darbar-ka-Mahal, now in ruins. Nearby is the Jain temple called Sat-bis Deori, containing the main shrine surrounded by several other shrines. To the South is the temple of Kumbha Shyam constructed by Rana Kumbha in 1450 A.D. . It is the shrine of Lord Krishna. In front of it there is the temple of Shyamnath said to have been constructed by Meerabai, wife of Bhojraj and daughter-in-law of Rana Sanga.

The *Jayastambha* or the pillar of victory is one of the most attractive sights on this hill. It was constructed by Rana Kumbha between 1442 and 1449 A.D., to commemorate his victories. It is 120′ high and 30′ broad at the base. It has nine storeys and from top to bottom it is richly ornamented and has numerous figures of Hindu gods and goddesses. Col. Todd described this *jayastambha* as superior in architecture to that of Kutab-Minar in Delhi and Fergusson says that this tower is in infinitely better taste as an architectural object than the pillar of Trojan at Rome.

Going further southwest one comes across the place known as Maha Sati where the earlier Ranas and Queens were cremated. There is the temple of Samiddishwara Mahadev known as Mokalji's temple, repaired by Rana Mokal, in 1428 A.D. In one of the inscriptions in this temple, it is stated that Kumarpal, the Solanki ruler of Gujarat, came to Chitor. Nearby there are the Gaumukh Spring and the temple of Kalikadevi. Further south is the palace of Rana Ratan Singh and his Queen Padmini. There are also the ruins of the palace of Chitrang Maurya --from whose descendant, Bappa Raval captured Chitor.

To the north of this place are the Bhimlat water reservoir and the temple of Nilkantha Mahadeva. The most prominent place here is the *Kirti Stambha,* erected by Jija, a Bagherwal Jain Mahajan, in the 12th or 13th century and dedicated to Adinath, the first of the Jain Tirthankaras. It is 80′ high. It is nicely adorned with sculpture, and the figure of Adinath is repeated hundreds of times. It has seven stories. The temple of Annapurna was constructed by Rana Hamir. The Kukreshwar temple is also very old.

At every step in Chitor there are places which are hallowed by the memory of brave and gallant Rajputs, both male and female, who have shed their blood to save their motherland and maintain the purity of their blood.

This ancient capital of Sisodias is reminiscent of the glory of the Ranas of Mewar and their brave Rajputs, and that glory is attested by every stone in the battlements of this famous and ancient fort.

47. BHIMASHANKAR

Bhimashankar is considered to be one of the Jyotirlingas of Lord Siva. Several places in India are identified as locations for the temple of this Jyotirlinga. On the crest of the Sahyadri at the height of about 3,400 feet above sea level and at the source of river Bhima is situated the famous temple of Bhimashankar. This is identified with one of the twelve Jyotirlingas.

This temple is situated in the village of Bhovargiri, which is about 30 miles northwest of Khed in the Poona district. This place is also the source of river Bhima. Generally, sources of rivers are regarded as sacred places and usually there are some temples nearby to add to the holiness of the place. The shrine of Bhimashankar and the source of river Bhima are situated 19° 42′ north and 73° 23′ east. The river Bhima flows in the south-east direction and it ultimately meets the Krishna near Raichur.

On the bank of the river Bhima, there are two temples of Lord Siva; one old and the other new. The new temple was built by Nana Farnavis in the latter part of the 18th century. The old temple is built of black stone. It contains a large Nandi, and in the Garbhagriha is Lord Bhimashankar with five heads. The new temple built by Nana Farnavis is also of black stone. The east side of the temple has some ornamentation. Every year there is a big festival on the Mahasivaratri day which goes on for two or three days.

Legend says that Lord Siva destroyed the demon called Tripurasura and after killing that demon he rested here. At that time, one Bhimaka, who was a king of Oudh, propitiated Lord Siva. This Bhimaka sought pardon for having wounded two Rishis during a hunting expedition. Bhimaka was pardoned. There were drops of perspiration on Siva's body on account of the fatigue produced during his fight with Tripurasura and at Bhimaka's request, legend says that those drops of perspiration changed into a river which is now known as river Bhima.

Another legend says that one Bhati Rao discovered this Jyotirlinga near a tree with the help of his cow which dropped milk at this particular spot near a tree and this incident led to the discovery of the Jyotirlinga.

In the *stotra* of the twelve Jyotirlingas, it has been stated that the Jyotirlinga of Bhimashankar is situated at a place known as Dakini. There is no place known as Dakini in the vicinity of this Bhimashankar temple on the Sahyadri. It is situated at the source of the river Bhima and it is also said that water is constantly oozing out of the image of Lord siva.

There are two *kundas* near the temple constructed by Nana Farnavis.

According to *Siva Purana, Koti Rudra Samhita,* chapter 20, the temple of Bhimashankar is situated in the Kamarupa country, i.e. Assám. This temple is identified with the one on the Brahmapur hill near Gauhati in Assam. Legend says that there was a king named Kamarupa in Assam, a devotee of Lord Siva. A demon called Bhima was constantly disturbing and troubling the devotees of the Lord, including this king. One day he came to attack the king with an open sword. At that time, the king was concentrating on the Sivalinga. Demon Bhima tried to attack the king with the sword, but the same fell on the Sivalinga; immediately on this the Lord came out and destroyed the demon. Since then, the legend says, the Lord has been there in the form of a Jyotirlinga.

Though *Siva Purana, Koti Rudra Samhita* references state that Bhimashankar temple is in the Kamarupa country, there is also a reference in that very chapter to Mount Sahya, i.e. Sahyadri and it is stated that Bhima came from Sahya.

> कामरूपाभिधे देशे शङ्करो लोककाम्यया ।
> अवतीर्णः स्वयं साक्षात् कल्याणसुखभाजनम् ॥

Also

> सह्ये च पर्वते सोऽपि मात्रा वासं चकार ह ।

There is also a place in the Naini Tal district which claims to have the temple of Lord Bhimashankar. Near Kashipur there is a village known as Ujjanaka which has a pretty big temple of Bhimashankar and local tradition says that this is identical with the Jyotirlinga of the same name. Though *Siva Purana* says that this temple is situated in the Kamarupa country, the usual references to Bhimashankar associate the place known as Dakini with this temple. Local people say that this place in the Naini Tal district was known as a Dakini country in olden days. Bhimasena, the second Pandava, was married to Hidamba and it is stated that this Hidamba was a Dakini and belonged to this place. This temple contains a very big image of the Lord. Here, a fairly big festival is held on the Mahasivaratri day. On the east side of the temple there is a shrine of Bhairavnath and near to the temple is situated a tank known as Shivaganga. To the west is the temple of the Goddess.

Verse 10 of the *Jyotirlinga Stotra* attributed to Shankaracharya describes the Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga as follows:

> यं डाकिनीशाकिनिकासमाजे निषेव्यमानं पिशिताशनैश्च ।
> सदैव भीमादिपदप्रसिद्धं तं शङ्करं भक्तहितं नमामि ॥

48. INDRAPRASTHA

पूर् ! विभूतिमति ! कैः पुरातनैः सार्वभौमविभवैस्त्वमन्विता ! ।
अस्तु शाश्वतमनर्गलं महः पूर्वचित्रचरितात् तवाऽद्भुतम् ॥

"Glorious City! With how many ancient grand and prosperous Empires have you been associated! Let the majestic lustre of the Capital of Independent Bharat be eternal and surpass the glory it had in its strange and colourful past history."

Indraprastha is the old Delhi which is also called Sakraprastha, Brihasthala, Khandava-prastha, Sakrapuri and Satakratu-prastha. This city has become famous since the time of *Mahabharata* where the name of Indraprastha has been immortalised as the capital of the Pandavas, till they won the *Mahabharata* war. This city of the Pandavas was constructed on the bank of river Yamuna and its location is pointed out between the kotla of Firoz Shah and the tomb of Humayun about two miles south of modern Delhi. River Yamuna has moved eastward from this place. Indraprastha formed part of the Khandava Vana, which name is given to the large area between Bulandshahr and Saharanpur.

After the *swayamvara* of Draupadi, the jubilant Pandavas came to Hastinapura. Their uncle, Dhritarashtra, and his sons the Kauravas were very jealous at the prospect of the powerful Pandavas settling down in Hastinapura. To avoid that, Vidura was sent to Yudishthira with a message that Pandavas should not come to Hastinapura, but should take possession of the Khandava Vana which was also known as the Indra Vana; further that they should clear the forest, establish a new city and rule from that place. Yudhishthira accepted the suggestion of Dhritarashtra—namely "Enter the Khandavaprastha and have the half share of the Kingdom."

अर्धराज्यं तु संप्राप्य खाण्डवप्रस्थमाविश ।

—*Adi* 227-17.

Friends of Pandavas including Krishna accompanied Yudhishthira. Krishna asked Viswakarma to construct a city for the Pandavas which was like the capital of Indra. It was named after Indra and became known as Indraprastha.

वासुदेवस्तु तच्छ्रुत्वा विश्वकर्माणमूचिवान् ।
कुरुष्व राजराजस्य महेन्द्रपुरसन्निभम् ।
इन्द्रेण कृतनामानं इन्द्रप्रस्थं महापुरम् ॥

—*Adi* 227, 56-57.

This city was equipped with sharp weapons, Sataghni weapons which could kill 100 people at a time, several mechanical contrivances and iron weapons in the shape of great wheels.

तीक्ष्णांकुशशतघ्नीभि र्यन्त्रजालैश्च शोभितम् ।
आयसैश्च महाचक्रैः शुशुभे तत्पुरोत्तमम् ॥

—*Adi* 227, 64, 65.

When the city was ready after construction, King Yudhishthira entered it along with learned brahmins, his brothers and other Kings from the gate known as Vardhamanapura.

पुरीं सर्वगुणोपेतां निर्मितां विश्वकर्मणा ।
पौरवाणामधिपतिः कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
वर्धमानपुरद्वारात् प्रविवेश महाद्युतिः ॥

—*Adi* 227, 83 to 86.

In the *Udyogaparva,* before the Mahabharata war started, Pandavas sent a message to Kauravas for the settlement of their claim. King Yudhishthira was prepared to compromise his claim to the utmost limit possible, and he sent word to Duryodhana that even if the Pandavas were given only five villages they would be satisfied. The reply of Duryodhana is well known. He said that he would not part with even a pin-point of land. The five towns demanded by Pandavas are stated to be

1. Paniprasta or Panipat near Kurukshetra;
2. Sonaprastha or Sonepat, which is about 25 miles north of Delhi;
3. Tilaprastha, which is about 6 miles south-west of Tughlakhabad and 10 miles south-east of Kutub Minar. Tilaprastha was included in and was part of Indraprastha;
4. Indraprastha itself; and
5. Bhagaprastha or Bagpat, which is situated about 30 miles west of Meerut on river Yamuna.

Instead of these five cities, *Udyogaparva* 31-10 mentions the following:—

अविस्थलं वृकस्थलं माकन्दीं वारणावतम् ।
अवसानं भवत्वत्र किंचिदेकं च पञ्चमम् ॥

1. Avisthala 2. Vrikasthala 3. Makandi 4. Varanavata and 5. any other town which may be selected by Duryodhana.

On the bank of river Yamuna is situated the Nigambod Ghat in the Delhi of Shahjahan and there is a temple of Nila Chhatri. Both of them are said to have been constructed by King Yudhishthira when he performed the great Rajasuya sacrifice here.

Evidently, these places formed part of Indraprastha, the Capital of Pandavas. The *Rajasuya* sacrifice was performed with great pomp at this place. An extraordinary *Sabha Mandapa* was built here by Mayasura and it was so deftly constructed that the surface of water appeared like the surface of the flooring and vice versa.

The name of Indraprastha is still preserved in the name of Indrapat, which is one of the popular names of the Purana Killa at Delhi. This Purana Killa is also stated to be the ancient fort of Emperor Yudhishthira. This ancient fort of the Hindus was repaired and renovated by Humayun and was renamed by him as Dinpanna. It now contains the Killa Koni Mosque and the palace of Sher Shah.

Even though practically nothing has remained of the ancient capital of Yudhishthira, its sacred memories have remained in the minds of people of Bharat and they consider a visit to Indraprastha and a bath in the Yamuna as highly meritorious. It is said that at the following three places, river Yamuna is specially sacred; at Indraprastha, at Prayag and at Sagara Sangama. Even at Indraprastha the Nigambod i.e. the Nigamodbodha Tirtha is considered particularly holy.

यमुना सर्वसुलभा त्रिषु स्थानेषु दुर्लभा ।
इन्द्रप्रस्थे प्रयागे च सागरस्य च सङ्गमे ॥

Purana Killa is near Lal Darwaja which was part of one of the famous gates of the Capital of Sher Shah. Construction of this Purana Killa was started by Humayun in 1533 A.D.. Seven years after, Sher Shah completed it. Local tradition states that the place where there is at present the Killa Koni Mosque was exactly the place from where Arjuna guarded the city with his famous bow Gandiva; the palace of Sher Shah was the very place where Pandavas and Sri Krishna had their deliberations; and the open space near Sher Shah's palace was the place where King Yudhishthira performed the *Rajasuya* sacrifice.

At Indrapat and in the Yamuna basin have been found the painted grey ware and other subsequent ceramics of the early historic times—of the same kind as are found at Rupar and Hastinapura.

Within a distance of 11 to 12 miles from modern Delhi, there have been cities after cities founded upon the ruins of their predecessors. And it is estimated that all these cities put together cover an area of about 45 square miles. The first city is naturally Indraprastha founded by King Yudhishthira who flourished according to the Indian tradition in the beginning of Kali age which began in 3101 B.C. Modern scholars place the Mahabharata was in the 15th century B.C. This city was developed into a great kingdom by the Pandavas. After winning the Kauravas in the *Mahabharata* war, King Yudhishthira ruled from Hastinapura, situated north-east of Delhi, about 22 miles north-east of Meerut on the bank of river Ganges. After the death of Sri Krishna, Arjuna brought back from Dwaraka the Yadava ladies and grandson of Krishna. This grandson of Krishna, Vajra by name, was established as the king of Indraprastha.

After Yudhishthira came Parikshit, the grandson of Arjuna and his 29 descendants. This line was followed by the dynasty of Visarva. That dynasty was followed by those of the Gautamas and the Mayuras. By about the 1st century B.C. the city had moved further south. It is stated that this new city was founded by Raja Dilu, one of the Mayura rulers. The name of Delhi is derived from this Raja Dilu or Dhilu.

In the fourth century A.D. Raja Dhava erected the famous iron pillar. The pillar is in perfect preservation and is an extraordinary monument of ancient India.

It is of wrought iron—23 feet long, and in spite of rains and winds it has stood there for more than 15 centuries. It is still unrusted and the inscriptions on it are still very clear and sharp. It commemorates the victory of King Dhava over the Balhikas of the Punjab. Another interpretation is that this pillar was constructed by Chandra Raja in the 5th century A.D.. Still another interpretation is that the pillar was erected first by Kumara Gupta I in 450 A.D. It is situated in the quadrangle of the Yajnashala of King Prithviraja, which is called Bhootkhana by Mohammadans.

It appears that Delhi, which was an important centre in the 4th century A.D., was deserted thereafter for a few centuries until it was once again made the capital by King Anang Pal after Kanoj was conquered by Rathors. Prithviraj Chauhan was the last Hindu King and after 1193 A.D. Delhi became the capital of the Pathans. Construction of Kutub Minar was commenced in 1193 and was completed in 1200 A.D..

Kutub Minar has a grand line of arches, eleven in number. Iban Batuta describes Kutub Minar as having no equal anywhere in the world either in beauty or extent. The Minar is 230 feet high and is divided into five storeys with decorated balconies. One tradition is that this Minar was a Hindu building and the pillar was constructed by Rai Pithora for his daughter for the purpose of having a view of the river Yamuna. There are two Ashoka pillars in Delhi, containing the edicts of the Emperor. One of them is situated at Ferozabad or the Kotla of Ferozshah. It was removed to this place from Srughna. The other is situated near the Mutiny Memorial Tower of 1857 A.D.. It was brought to this place from Meerut.

Alauddin kept his army at Siri in 1303 A.D. and constructed another city there. In 1320 A.D. Tughlak Shah came to the throne. He was not satisfied with the low walls of the city and he therefore removed the city five miles eastward and named it Tughlakabad. It is said that Saint Nizamuddin had uttered a curse against this city called Tughlakabad and therefore it was subsequently deserted.

Mohamad Tughlak, the second ruler of this dynasty, constructed a wall joining the Old Delhi and Siri and established his own city which was known as Jahanpanah.

Firoz Shah constructed the city of Firozabad about five miles northeast of Siri in 1354 A.D.. Humayun built Purana Killa in 1534 A.D.. The last city which is known as the seventh city was built by Shah Jahan in 1648 A.D..

The reason why this city of Delhi has changed its location so many times is stated to be the change in the course of river Yamuna which is gradually going further and further east and which has been the main source of water supply to this imperial capital.

49. KAPILAVASTU

Kapilavastu was the ancient capital of the Sakyas and it was the birthplace of Buddha, who is also called Sakya Muni as he was a descendant of the royal house of the Sakyas. Before the site of Kapilavastu was properly identified, various conjectures were made about its identification. At one time, it was believed that Kapilavastu was situated at a place now called Bhuila Dih, in the north-west part of the Basti district in the United Provinces, about 25 miles north-east of Fyzabad, and between the rivers Ghagra and Gandak. Another site near Nagarkhas in the northern division of Oudh was also identified with Kapilavastu. A third site near the Nepalese village of Nigliva situated in the north of Gorakhpur in the Nepalese Terai, about 31 miles north-west of the Uskabazar railway station, was subsequently identified with this ancient city of Kapilavastu. At this place, an inscription was found on a pillar which recorded a visit by Asoka and the repairs he had made to the *stupa* of Konagamana. But subsequent investigations have made it clear that there was no such *stupa* in the neighbourhood of this area and that the pillar referred to was not there in its original position.

Sri P. C. Mukherjee has finally identified Kapilavastu with Tilaura, which is situated two miles north of Tauliva and three and half a mile of Nigliva, referred to above. It has been shown that the city of Kapilavastu was made up of four modern villages of Chitradei, Ramghat, Sandwa and Tilaura and that the fort and the palace of the Sakyas were at the site where there is the modern village of Tilaura. Sri P. C. Mukherjee has further identified Lumbinivana where Buddha was actually born with Rummindi. It is a corruption of the word Lumbini Devi and it is situated 10 miles to the east of the site identified with Kapilavastu by Sri P. C. Mukherjee. It is two miles to the north of Bhagwanpur and about a mile to the north of Paderia.

Buddhist works state that Buddha was born at the Lumbinivana which was situated near Kapilavastu. At this place a pillar was found in 1896. An inscription on it shows that it was erected here by Asoka in the Lumbini garden to mark it off as the birthplace of Buddha. In the 7th century A.D., the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen-Tsang, described this pillar as having been struck by lightning. This pillar which was found here was split in the middle and this condition agreed with the description as given by Hiuen-Tsang. The inscription on the pillar of Asoka now leaves no doubt about the accuracy of the identification of Lumbinivana and Kapilavastu which was situated nearby. The inscription says that King Devanampriya Priyadarsī personally visited this site in the 20th year of his reign; that the Sakya Muni, Buddha, was born at this place and that King Asoka had constructed a pillar there to mark the site of his birth. Asoka also gave up the revenue of the Lumbini village and declared it *Muafi.*

This place also contains a temple of Maya Devi. The Sakyas of Kapilavastu received the 8th share of Buddha's remains after his death and the place where these remains were enshrined is marked by a *stupa.* This place is identified with Piprava. The place where the Sakyas were massacred by Virudhaka has been identified with Sagarwa, which is situated two miles north of Tilaura-kot.

It appears that the account of Kapilavastu given by the two Chinese pilgrims, Fa Hien and Hiuen-Tsang, are not consistent. Perhaps, when they visited India they were not shown the correct site. According to Fa Hien, Kapilavasthu was situated at Piprava, about 9 miles south-west of Rummindi. Hiuen-Tsang identified it with Tilaura-kot situated about 14 miles north-west of the Lumbinivana.

Lalitavistara, a Sanskrit work on Buddha, gives the story of Buddha on the Puranic style. At the request of the *Bhikshus* the Bhagwan reveals the Buddha *charitra.* When Buddha was a *sravasti* at Jetavana in the *upavana* of Ananthapindada, he was surrounded by 12,000 *bhikshus* and at their request Buddha *charitra* was described to them. Bodhisatva was requested to take an *avatara* in the Jamboodwipa and it was predicted that he would do so within twelve years.

According to some scholars, Buddha was born in 557 B.C.; according to others, in 623 B.C. The latter date has the support of the Ceylonese chronology. According to *Lalitavistara* (Chap. VI), Buddha entered the body of his mother, Maya Devi, in the form of an elephant on Vaisakha Sukla Purnima, and Maya Devi realised this fact in a dream.

The kingdom of the Sakyas was situated in the lower part of the Himalayas and to the east of Kosalas. The Sakyas acknowledged the overlordship of the king of Kosala. These Sakyas had a republican form of Government, like the Vajjians, Lichchhavis and Mallas. Among them the chief was an elected person. He was called the Raja and he became the head of the State. The state administration was carried on in the town hall known as Santhagara. Buddha's father Suddhodana was elected the Raja or President of the Sakya Republic.

According to Fa Hien, Kapilavastu was less than a yojana to the east of the town which was the birthplace of Kanaka Muni Buddha, who is considered to be one of the three predecessors of Sakya Muni in the present Maha-bhadra Kalpa. Sakya Muni is the fourth Buddha and Maitreya is the would-be fifth and the last Buddha. The three predecessors of Sakya Muni are stated to be Krakuchanda, Kanaka Muni and Kashyapa. When Fa Hien visited Kapilavastu, he found it desolate. There was neither King nor people. There were only a few monks and a score or two of families of common people. The spot where there was the old palace of King Suddhodana contained the images of Buddha and his mother. Various other places in and near about Kapilavastu which were connected with the life of Buddha were also marked out, and commemorative *stupas* or *viharas* were constructed on such spots. Fa Hien says that fifty li east from the city of Kapilavastu was a garden called Lumbini where the queen entered the pond and bathed. Having come forth from the pond on the northern bank and after walking twenty paces she lifted up her hand, *laid hold* of a branch of a tree and with her face to the east gave birth to the heir-apparent, i.e. Buddha. When he fell on the ground, he immediately walked seven paces. Two dragon kings appeared and washed his body. "At the place where they did so there was immediately found a well and from it as well as from the above pond where the queen bathed, monks even now constantly take water and drink it."

Fa Hien adds that the country of Kapilavastu when he saw it was a great scene of desolation. The inhabitants were few and far between.

According to Hiuen-Tsang, the country of Kapilavastu was about 4,000 li in circuit. The capital as well as some 1,000 villages are described by Hiuen-Tsang as all waste and ruined. The inner city was 50 li round and was completely encircled and exceedingly strong. Within the city were the foundations of the chief palace of Suddhodana Raja, over the ruins of which a *Vihara* was built. So also was there a *Vihara* on the old foundations of the sleeping hall of queen Maya. This is where Sakya Bodhisatva descended as a spirit into the womb of his mother. North-east of this place was a *stupa* where Rishi Asita cast the horoscope of Buddha. On the right and left of the city were the places where prince Siddhartha had his games and sports. The place where Siddhartha left the city on horseback was also identified. So also are the places where he turned back after seeing the old man, the sick man, the dead man and the *sramana*. To the east of this old city of Kapilavastu was a *stupa* 100 ft. high.

After the *nirvana* of Tathagata, the king of this country obtained a share of the sacred relics of Buddha and he enshrined them in this *stupa*. Hiuen-Tsang says that the *stupa* emitted rays of glory. Close by the side of this *stupa* was a *sangharama* and 100 li eastward of this *sangharama* there was a *stupa* built by Asoka at a place where Buddha took off his ornaments and clothes and the hair-jewel of his sacred tiara and gave them to Chhandaka. There were commemorative towers both at this place and at the place where Buddha cut off his hair.

The old city of Kapilavastu is described as being surrounded by seven walls and as the capital of the Sakyas. After the death of Buddha, eight Kshatriya clans claimed shares of the sacred remains of Buddha. They were the Sakyas, Koliyas, Bulis, Bhaggas, Kalamas, Moriyas, Mallas and Lichchhavis. Out of the eight, the Lichchhavis were the most powerful.

The Lumbinivana where Buddha was born is said to be situated on the banks of the river Rohini between Devadaha of the Koliyas and Kapilavastu of the Sakyas.

The earliest archaeological object discovered at Lumbinivana is the Asoka Pillar along with the inscription. There is another pillar known as the Nigali Sagar pillar of

Asoka containing also an inscription. It states that in the 14th year of the reign of King Asoka the king enlarged the *stupa* of Kanakamana to double its size and after six more years the king himself came down to the spot, worshipped it and erected a stone pillar.

The Nigrodha Vana was situated very near the city of Kapilavastu. Hiuen-Tsang locates the Nigrodha monastery at a distance of less than a mile from Kapilavastu. Sri P. C. Mukherjee has identified the Nigrodha monastery as the largest mound to the south of Lori-Kudan, about 1½ miles west of Tauliva. Buddha visited Kapilavastu after attaining enlightenment at the request of his father, and at that time he stayed at the Nigrodha Vana. There he converted his son, Rahula, and his step-brother, Nanda, but he refused to accept his step-mother, Prajapati, as a nun even though requested to do so by Ananda. He subsequently ordained her and other princesses at Vaisali.

Lalitavistara describes at great length the prosperity of Kapilavastu and the court of King Suddhodana in the time of Buddha. Buddha came to Kapilavastu twice after he had attained enlightenment. King Virudhaka attacked the Sakyas at Kapilavastu and he is stated to have massacred them. By about the 5th century Kapilavastu was in a state of desolation. The place where the Sakyas were massacred is stated to contain a number of small *stupas*.

The celebrations in connection with the completion of 2,500 years after the *Mahaparinirvana* of Buddha have once again brought to light this ancient and sacred site where Buddha was born. Modern monuments have again been erected to perpetuate the memory of Tathagata Buddha. Pilgrims from numerous Asiatic countries have paid homage to this spot.

50. BROACH

भृगुकच्छात् ततो धीमान् साम्नैवामित्रकर्शनः ।
आगम्यतामिति प्राह धर्मराजस्य शासनात् ॥
—*Sabhaparva* 32-78.

"The intelligent prince, the destroyer of enemies, saw him coming peacefully from Bhrigu Katchha. He welcomed him in the name of King Yudhishthira."

River Narmada is one of the main rivers of India and is also known by the name of Rewa. It has its rise in the Maikal mountain and therefore it is known as Makela Suta or the daughter of Mount Maikal. As Rewa, she starts from the place known as Amarkantak which is about 3,500 feet high, passes through the range of mountains of Vindhya and Satpura, and then enters Gujarat. That portion of Gujarat, which is on the banks of the river Rewa or Narmada was called Rewa Kantha. This river has a course of about 800 miles. After descending from Amarkantak it moves between the two mountain ranges of Vindhya and Satpura for about 500 miles. The mountain ranges are nowhere more than 40 miles away from each other. About 200 miles from Amarkantak she passes through the deep-cut channel of marble rocks near Jubbulpore. For about 200 miles further up to the town of Handia, the river stretches itself into a great basin. For about 180 miles further up to Haranfal, she passes through Malwa and reaches Gujarat. For about 80 miles further up to Makrai, she moves rapidly and from there up to the Gulf of Cambay, for a distance of about 100 miles, the river moves through the plain of Gujarat. It is the greatest river of Gujarat and one of the greatest in India. On both banks of the river there are steep mountains and dense jungles. Through them this river moves on, leaping with awe-inspiring majesty. This river is known as Rudra Kanya. Lord Siva is Rudra when he is angry and Shankar or giver of happiness in His benevolent mood. This Rewa or Rudra Kanya has also two aspects. She is awe-inspiring during her course of the few hundred miles and when it comes to the plains it moves with peaceful tranquillity and benevolence.

In the last course of its journey it moves through the fertile, flat plain of Gujarat. Near Broach its breadth is about a mile. Below Broach as it proceeds towards the sea, the river widens out into an estuary and its breadth is about 16 to 17 miles. The north bank of the river is high and steep near Broach. The Narmada has three tributaries, *viz.* Kauvery, Amraoti and Bhukhi.

As stated earlier, Narmada is considered to be the daughter of Rudra or Siva. It is believed that the mere sight of Narmada is enough to liberate one from sins:

पुण्या कनखले गङ्गा कुरुक्षेत्रे सरस्वती ।
ग्रामे वा यदि वाऽरण्ये पुण्या सर्वत्र नर्मदा ॥
(*Matsya* 186-10).

River Ganga is sacred at Kanakhal; river Saraswati at Kurukshetra, but river Narmada is considered sacred everywhere, whether it is in a village or a forest.

पितृणां दुहिता पुण्या नर्मदा सरितां वरा ।
तेत्र श्राद्धानि दत्तानि अक्षयाणि भवन्त्युत ॥
(*Vayu* 77-32).

The Narmada is called the sacred daughter of the *Pitris* and the *shraddas* performed on her banks are believed to yield inexhaustible results.

Near the town of Broach is supposed to be the place where King Bali performed the horse sacrifices.

The *Dasashvamedha* ghat of the river is famous as the sacred site and it is considered specially meritorious to burn dead bodies here. The stones of the Narmada are worshipped as *banas* of Lord Siva. A pilgrimage of Narmada from the point of its meeting the sea (Sagara Sangama) to her source at Amarkantak and back again is considered most rewarding. It is known as *parikrama* and it takes about a year as the pilgrim who goes walking, sees on the way numerous *tirthas* on both the banks of the river.

River Narmada has numerous names. It is said to have its rise from the perspiration of Lord Siva. She was called Narmada as she caused delight by her frequent appearance and disappearance. She is called Rewa because she makes a lot of noise as she flows along. In all, there are thirty-five confluences of river Narmada. The best of them, of course, is the Rewa *sagara sangama* or the confluence of river Narmada and the sea.

Broach or Baru Katchha or Bhrigu-pura or Bhrigu Kshetra or Bhrigu Katchha is situated on the bank of the river Narmada near the river's confluence with the sea. This Bharu Katchha or Bhrigu Katchha is a town of great antiquity. It has been referred to in *Mahabharata* in *Sabha Parva* 32-78. Bhima's son Ghatotkacha is said to have stayed there. In the Periplus, the town and harbour of Broach has been referred to as Barugaza. Ptolemy refers to it as Barygaza. An Indian philosopher died at Athens and on his tomb the epitaph refers to Bargoso or Broach: "Of Zarmano Chegao, an Indian, a native of Bargoso, who immortalised himself, according to the custom of his country." (Strabo III-119)

From early times this Bhrigu Katchha has been considered a sacred *tirtha* and also as an important port. *Kurmapurana* 2-41 refers to this Bhrigu *tirtha*, or Broach, as the best *tirtha,* where sage Bhrigu propitiated the gods by his penance. The hill on which the existing town of Broach is located was the first place where Goddess Lakshmi is stated to have constructed a town for herself, called Srinagar. In due course, it became deserted and jungle grew up in place of the old city. This jungle was stated to be in possession of Hatika, a daughter of Hidamba, wife of Bhimasena. *Mahabharata Sabha Parva* refers to Ghatotkacha, son of Hidamba, as staying near Bhrigu Katchha. In this jungle the adventurous sage Bhrigu established his *ashram* on a hillside, near the bank of the river. 18,000 pupils and followers of Bhrigu subsequently came after him and established themeslves in this area which was known as Hidambavana. Noticing this large population, sage Bhrigu remembered *Visvakarma* and established on the back of the *Kurma* this ancient city of Broach, in the Nandana Samvatsara, on the 5th of the bright half of the month of Magha; and Rewa Khanda of *Skanda Purana* says that from this time onwards the place became known as Bhrigu Katchha.

King Bali is said to have performed *ashvamedha* sacrifice at this place and given away his entire kingdom to Vishnu, who assumed the form of Vamana. Ushavadata refers to it as a well-known *tirtha.*

Since ancient times Bhrigupura was known for its maritime activity. India had a very large trade with Babylon at least from the middle of the second millennium B.C. Jatakas refer to the maritime activity of Broach. By about the first century A.D. all the import and export trade of India on this side was centred at the port of Broach. Kabul had traded with Broach since the first century A.D. Pliny says that there was no year in which India did not drain the Roman Empire of a hundred million sestertii.

Sri K. M. Munshi suggests that near the confluence of river Narmada with the sea there was the famous Mahishmati-puri, where ruled Kartavirya Sahasrarjuna. This Kartavirya was destroyed by Parashurama.

This city of Broach has been frequently referred to in Buddhist Jatakas, several puranas and in the writings of Greek and Roman writers. For a long time, three famous harbours were held as important on the west coast of India. They were Surparaka (Sopara), near Salsette, Broach or Bhrigu Katchha on the banks of the Narmada, and Prabhasa in Saurashtra.

Broach, which was a part of the Lata country, was included in the empire of Asoka. It was also with some of the Kshatrapa and Andhra rulers for some time. Thereafter it became part of the Gupta Empire. Varahamihira refers to Bhrigu Katchha. So also does Hieun-Tsang. He refers to ten Buddhist monasteries and to a few temples in Broach. In the 7th century the Arabs attacked Broach. The Solankis of Anhilwad ultimately annexed the country of Lata to Gujarat and both parts thereafter became fused into one great country. After 1,300 A.D. it came into the hands of Muslim governors. In 1772 the British took it for a few years and finally in 1803. There were quite a few different readings of the name of Broach in ancient times. It is called sometimes Bharu Katchha, Bhaaru Katchha, Bhiru Katchha, Bhrigu Katchha.

The fortifications of the town of Broach are said to have been constructed by Siddharaj Jaisingh and they were strengthened by Bahadur Shah.

Broach, as stated above, has come down as a city of great antiquity and is also referred to as a place of pilgrimage, but apart from the sacredness of Narmada at her confluence with the sea near Broach, there remains practically nothing at the present, which is a relic of its ancient holiness. The temples of Lord Siva, sage Bhrigu, Lord Ganganath, Avimukteswara and Somnath are stated to contain ancient images or *siva lingas,* but the architecture of the temples is new.

The legendary founder of this city of Broach is sage Bhrigu. *Rig Veda* says that it was Sage Bhrigu who first brought Agni on the Earth and that other sages worshipped Agni on the pattern of Sage Bhrigu. *Aitareya Brahmana* describes Bhrigu as one of the three sons of Prajapati. *Taittiriya Upanishad* states that Bhrigu was the son of Varuna and that he obtained the knowledge of Brahman from his father Varuna. According to *Bhagavata,* Bhrigu was present at the sacrifice of Dhaksha when Lord Siva was insulted. Bhrigu is said to have taken part in this insult and in consequence got his beard burnt.

Bhrigu also decided the question as to who was the best among Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. First he went to see Siva on Kailasa. Nandi as the door-keeper stopped him and when he ultimately went inside, Siva never looked at him, but continued to play with Parvati. Bhrigu was disgusted and went to Brahmadeva. The latter neither rose to receive him nor saluted him. Further disappointed, Bhrigu went to Vishnu. The latter was asleep. Bhrigu kicked him on the chest. Vishnu got up and instead of getting angry, he enquired of Bhrigu whether there was any injury to his leg. The sage was highly satisfied and declared Vishnu as the best of the three. Bhrigu is also credited with the Sanjivani Vidya. He is said to have revived Jamadagni. Bhrigu is said to have had two wives called Divya and Paulomi. From Divya was born sage Sukra. From Poulomi was born sage Chyavana, who was married to Sukanya. Chyavana's two sons were Aptavan and Dadhicha. Aurva was the son of

Aptavan. Originally the Bhrigus and the Angirasas were separate but later on, they combined and were known as Bhrigu Angirases or Atharva Angirases; this group of sages came to be known as the Rishis of the Atharva Samhita.

The place where the river Narmada enters the sea is known as the Jamadagnya Tirtha and it is at this *tirtha* that Lord Janardana obtained Perfection.

ततो गच्छेत राजेन्द्र नर्मदोदधिसङ्गमम् ।
जामदग्न्यमिति ख्यातं सिद्धो यत्र जनार्दनः ॥

Mastya 194, 34-35.

GLOSSARY

AMARNATH—Famous cave, about 86 miles from Srinagar, where Lord Shiva is worshipped in the form of a linga-shaped ice block formed by drops of water oozing naturally in the cave. 21.

AMARKANTAK—Mountain on the eastern part of the Vindhya ranges—the source of river Narmada. Also called Amrakuta. 90.

AMBARNATH—Near Kalyan, Bombay State, has an ancient temple noted for its architectural design. 157.

AIN-I-AKBARI—Book written by Abul Fazl, who was the minister of the Moghul ruler, Akbar. 27, 109, 146.

BHUVANESHWAR—Present capital of Orissa State, a city of temples and shrines. 14.

BRINDABAN—One of the holiest places, 6 miles from Mathura, on the bank of the river Yamuna, where Lord Krishna subdued the Kaliya snake. 65.

BHIMASHANKAR—Temple situated at the source of the river Bhima, 30 miles northwest of Khed in Poona District—one of the oldest jyotirlingas. 185.

BROACH—Also called Bhrigu Kshetra, in Gujarat, on the bank of river Narmada near its confluence with the sea. 201.

BHAGAVATA—One of the 18 sacred Puranas dealing with the Universe and the avataras of Vishnu. 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71.

CHITRAKUT—The celebrated hill where Lord Rama stayed with Sita and Lakshmana during his 12 year exile from Ayodhya. 74.

CHITOR—The famous fort in the old Udaipur State of Rajasthan, contains the Jayastamba or the "Pillar of Victory" 120 ft. high and 30 ft. broad at the base, considered superior in its architecture to Kutb Minar. 175.

CHAITANYA—A saint and ardent devotee of Lord Krishna, known by the name of Shri Krishna Chaitanya Deva, an avatar of Krishna. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39.

CAPE COMORIN—Also called "Kanya Kumari", situated at the "Lands End" of India, where the rising and setting of the sun in the same ocean can be seen. 58, 59, 63.

FA-HIEN—One of the famous Chinese pilgrims who wrote about his visit to India. 46, 164, 165, 166, 198.

GIRNAR—A sacred hill situated about 10 miles from Junagadh in Saurashtra, with numerous Jain temples and Buddhist caves. 115.

GWALIOR—A city of palaces, famous for the memorial of Queen Lakshmibai of Jhansi who fell bravely fighting her last battle at Gwalior in the Indian War of Independence in 1857—also for the tomb of Tansen, one of the greatest musicians of India. 130.

GITA GOVINDA—The immortal verses on Lord Krishna composed by the famous saint and poet Jayadeva in the 12th century. 31, 35, 66.

HARDWAR—One of the seven places of pilgrimage in India, situated at the foot of the Himalayas, where the sacred river Ganges gushes out from the mountains into the plains. 49.

HIEUN TSANG—One of the well-known Chinese pilgrims who wrote on his visits to India. 46, 49, 53, 56, 165, 166, 198, 199, 200.

INDRAPRASTHA—Called Purana Qila, in Delhi—the city of Pandavas on the bank of the river Yamuna, said to have been created by Viswakarma for the Pandavas under orders of Lord Krishna, on the model of the capital of Indra. 188.

KONARAK—One of the many Kshetras in Orissa State, famous for its ancient temples—headquarters of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peeta of Guru Sankaracharya. 123.

KOLHAPUR—A town in Bombay State, held sacred as the abode of Goddess Mahalakshmi. 137.

KAPILAVASTU—Birth place of Buddha—contains the Asoka pillar erected by King Asoka to mark the site of Buddha's birth. 195.

KUSUMANJALI—A famous work comprising of 1409 verses in 39 khandas composed by Jagadhara Bhatta of Kashmir in praise of Lord Shiva. 30, 32.

KURMA PURANA—One of the 18 sacred Puranas ascribed to Sage Vyasa. 203.

KUTUB MINAR—The well known "Wonder of the World" a minar 230 ft. high with 5 storeys and decorated balconies, built near Delhi by the Mughal rulers. 193.

LALITA VISTARA—A Sanskrit work on Buddha. 197, 200.

LUMBINI—Called Lumbini Vana, a garden in which Buddha was born—contains an Asoka pillar erected by King Asoka. 195, 196, 197, 199.

MALLIKARJUNA—Temple of Lord Shiva situated on the Srisailam mountain overlooking the river Krishna, in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh. 41.

MAHMUD OF GHAZNI—One of the Mughal rulers of India who looted and destroyed the shrine of Lord Somnath in 1025 A.D. 11.

MAHABHARATA—The great Epic of India written by Sage Vyasa. 46, 144, 147, 188, 192, 204.

MEGHADUTA—One of the classic works of the famous poet Kalidasa. 79, 91.

MATSYA PURANA—One of the 18 sacred Puranas ascribed to Sage Vyasa. 202, 207.

MAYA DEVI—Mother of Buddha. 197.

NADIA—Also known as Navadvipa, an island on the delta of the river Ganges in West Bengal—the birth place of the great saint Chaitanya—has the biggest and ancient University of Sanskrit learning. 31.

NAIMISHARANYA—A place of great antiquity, 25 miles from Lucknow, frequently mentioned in the Mahabharata, Ramayana and the Puranas as the sacred forest abode of sages. 144.

NAGARJUNA—A great Buddhist logician and the founder of the Mahayana School of Buddhism. 44, 45, 46.

PRABHAS PATAN—Or Prabhasa is a sacred place on the south-coast of Saurashtra, with the Kalabhairava Linga of Lord Shiva, which is said to have been worshipped by the Moon. 1.

PADMA PURANA—One of the 18 sacred puranas of Sage Vyasa. 149.

RIG VEDA—The prime scripture of the Hindus, the first of the four Vedas. 1, 2, 6, 89, 206.

RAJA TARANGINI—The chronicle of the kings of Kashmir, written by poet Kalhana. 21, 23, 26, 28.

RAGHUVAMSA—One of the classic works of Poet Kalidasa. 69, 79.

RAMAYANA—The great Epic of the story of Lord Rama, written by Sage Valmiki. 74, 124.

SOMNATH—First shrine of Lord Shiva at Prabhas Patan, established by the Moon, according to legend. The deity is named after the Moon. A new temple was constructed in 1951 and the Jyotirlinga of Somnath was installed by Rashtrapati Dr. Rajendra Prasad. 1.

SUCHINDRAM—Near Cape Comorin (Kerala), with a majestic temple of Trimurthi Mahalinga representing Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. 58.

SARNATH—One of the sacred places connected with Buddha, about 4 miles from Banaras, where Buddha first preached his doctrines to five monks who were his first disciples. A new temple of Buddha has been constructed at Sarnath. 162.

SKANDA PURANA—one of the 18 and the biggest Purana ascribed to Sage Vyasa. 1, 57, 117.

SHIVA PURANA—One of the 18 Puranas ascribed to Sage Vyasa dealing with the leela and the heroic acts of Lord Shiva. 150, 186.

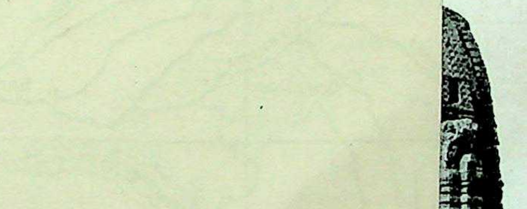
SANKARACHARYA—The celebrated Adi Sankaracharya, was the reformer who revitalised Hinduism. He preached Kewala Advaita, established four maths at four important centres in India, travelled widely and defeated in argument the rival schools, wrote Bashyas, on the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, Gita, Vishnu Sahasranama, and various stotras, 56, 60.

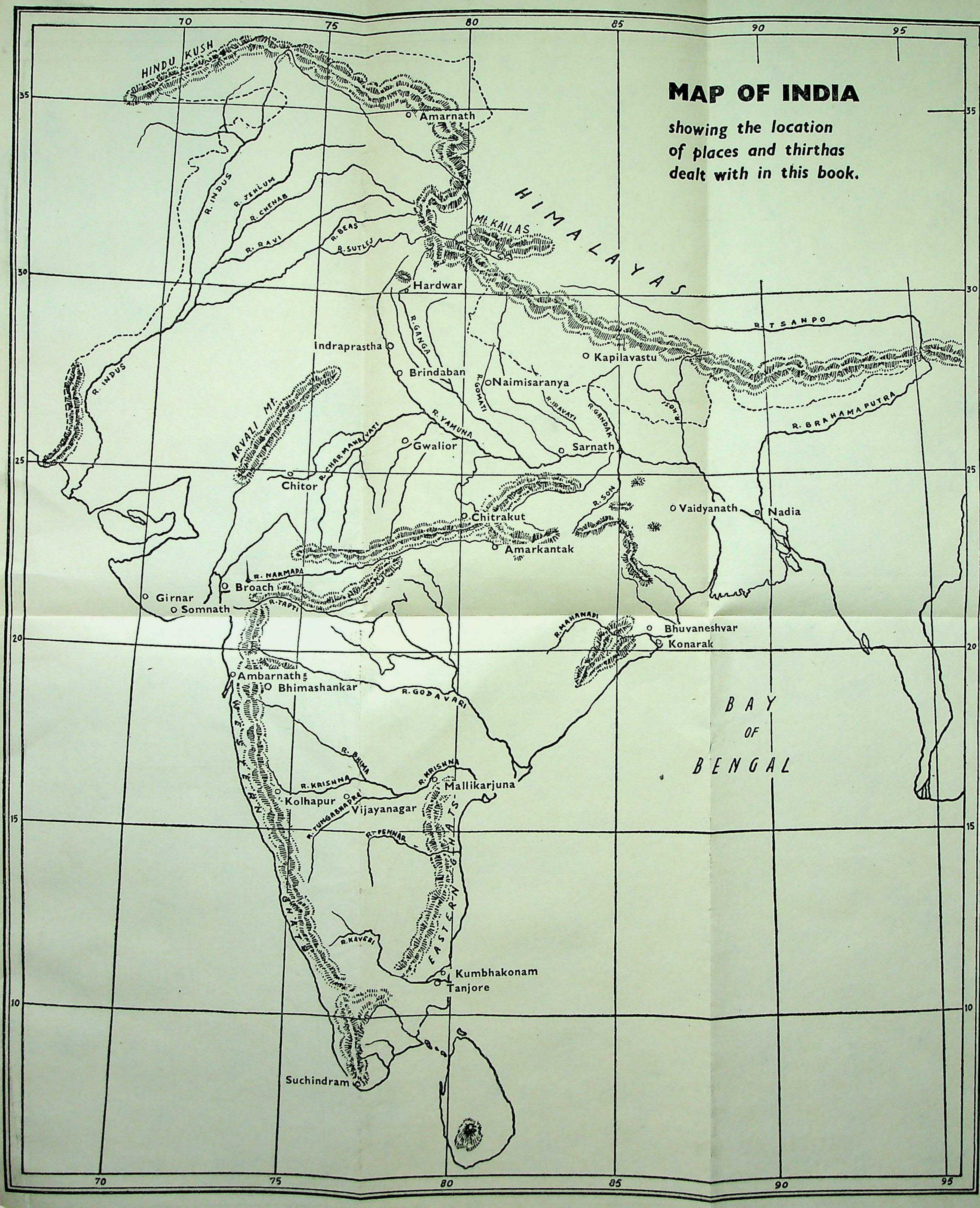
TANJORE—A place in South India famous for its temple with a big Nandi which, according to tradition, was imperceptibly growing in size every day till a nail was driven on its back when its growth was checked. 82.

VIJAYANAGAR—The great empire in India founded in 1336 A.D., the ruins of which are now found near Hampi in Andhra Pradesh. 98.

VAIDYANATH—Or Deogarh, in Bengal, which contains the Jyotirlinga of Lord Shiva, said to have been left there by Ravana according to legend. 150.

VAYU PURANA—One of the 18 Puranas ascribed to Sage Vyasa. 149.

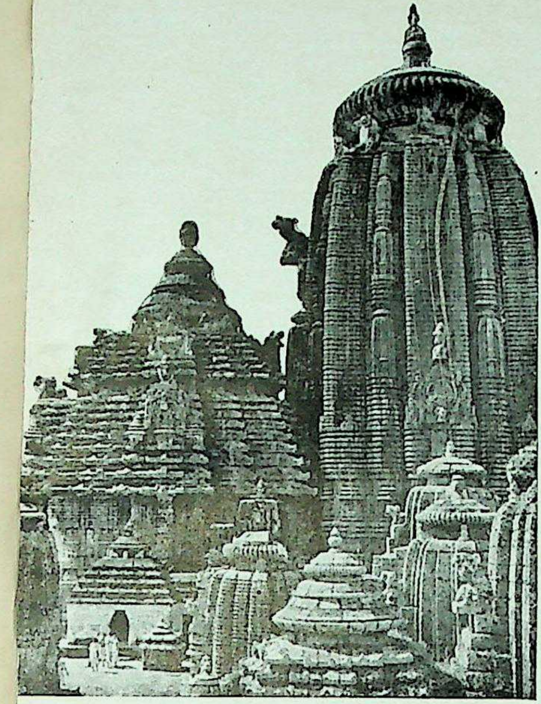




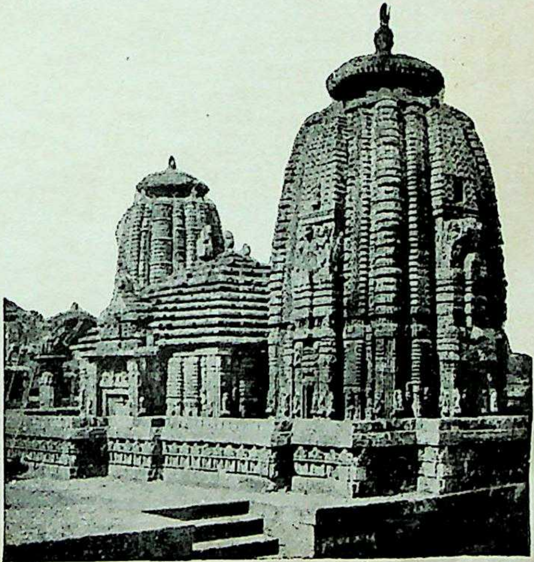
MAP OF INDIA

showing the location of places and thirthas dealt with in this book.

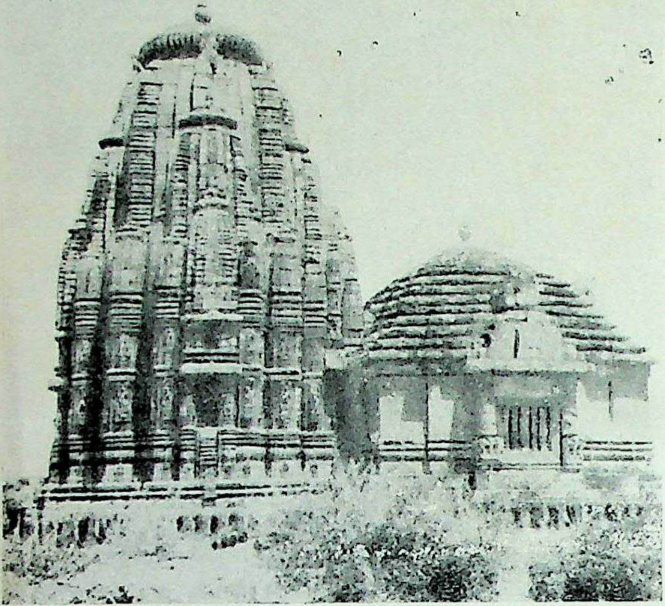
70
75
80
85
90
95
35
30
25
20
15
10
HINDU KUSH
Amarnath
HIMALAYAS
R. INDUS
R. JEHLUM
R. CHENAB
R. RAVI
R. BEAS
R. SUTLEJ
Mt. KAILAS
Hardwar
R. TSANPO
R. GANGA
Indraprastha
Kapilavastu
Brindaban
Naimisaranya
R. GOMATI
R. IRAVATI
R. GANDAK
R. SON
R. BRAHAMA PUTRA
ARVALI Mt.
R. YAMUNA
R. CHARMANAVATI
Gwalior
Sarnath
Chitor
R. SON
Vaidyanath
Nadia
Chitrakut
Amarkantak
R. NARMADA
Broach
Girnar
Somnath
R. TAPTI
R. MAHANADI
Bhuvaneshvar
Konarak
Ambarnath
Bhimashankar
R. GODAVARI
BAY OF BENGAL
WESTERN GHATS
R. BHIMA
R. KRISHNA
R. KRISHNA
Mallikarjuna
Kolhapur
Vijayanagar
R. TUNGABHADRA
R. PENNAR
EASTERN GHATS
R. KAVERI
Kumbhakonam
Tanjore
R. PENNAR
Suchindram



1. *Lingaraja Temple Bhuvanesvar.*



2. *Mukteshwara Temple, Bhuvanesvar.*



3. *Rajarani Temple, Bhuvanesvar.*

4. *Image of Sri Gauranga from Mahaprabhu's Bari, Navadvipa.*

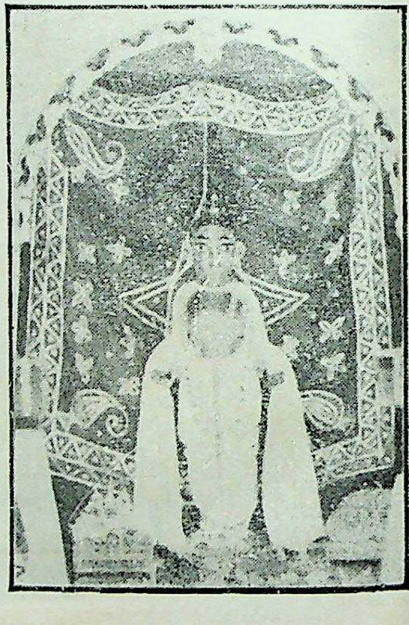
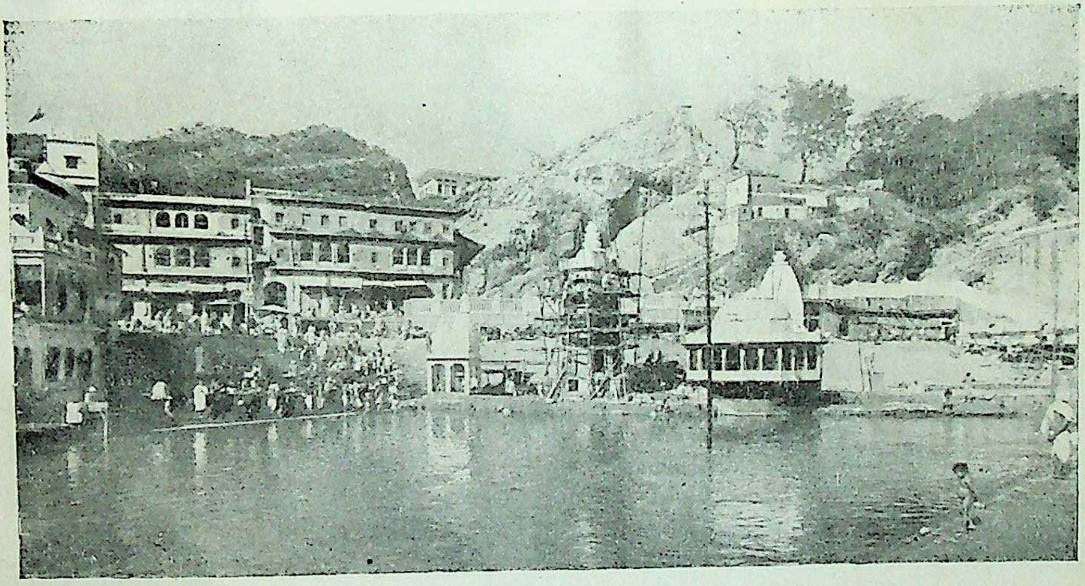
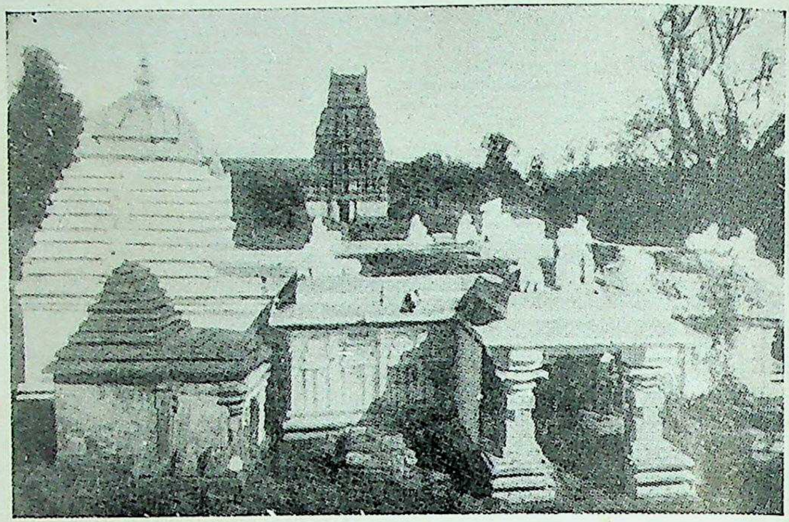


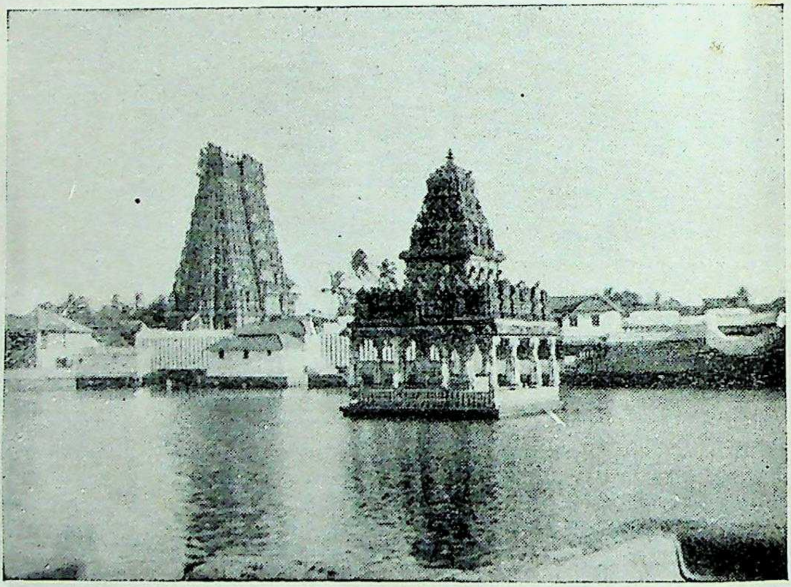
PLATE III



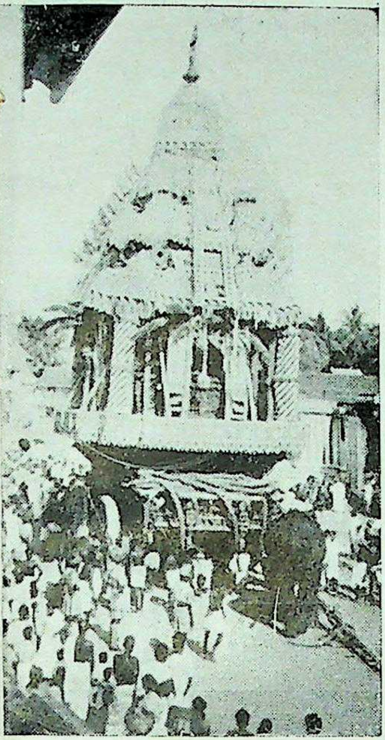
5. *Bathing ghat, Hardwar.*



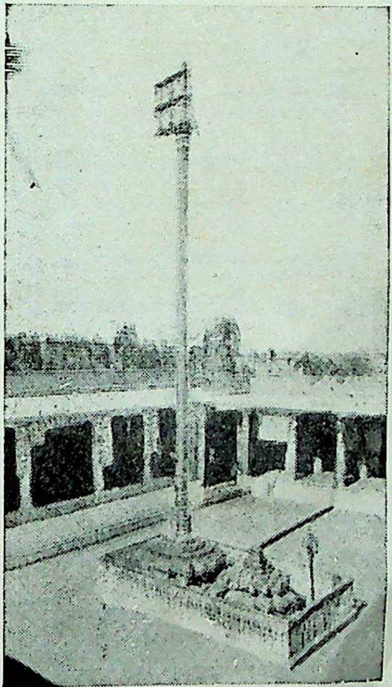
6. *Mallikarjuna Temple, Srisailam.*



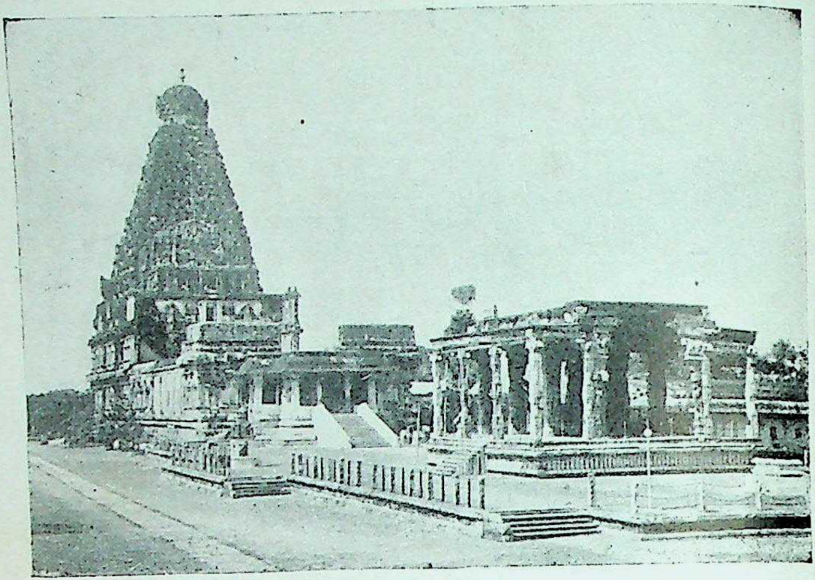
7. *The temple with the sacred tank, Suchindram.*



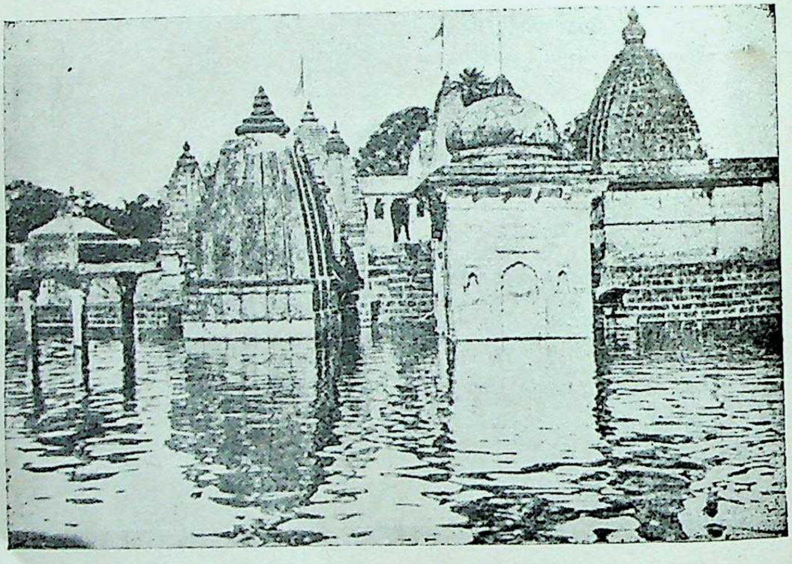
8. *Car Festival, Suchindram.*



9. *The golden dhvajasthambha of Sri Rangaraja Temple, Brindavan.*

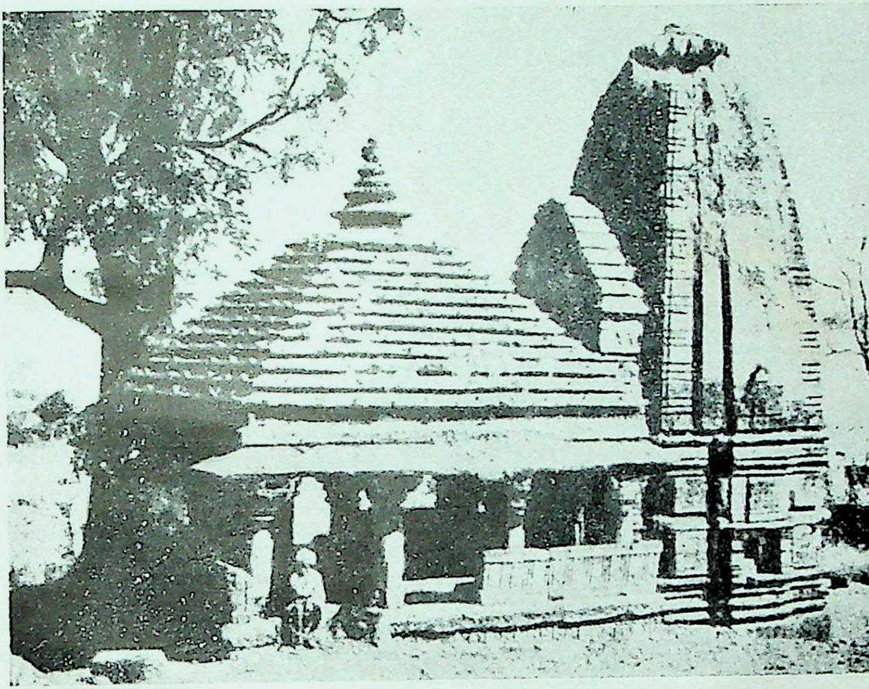


10. *Brihadisvara Temple, Tanjore.*

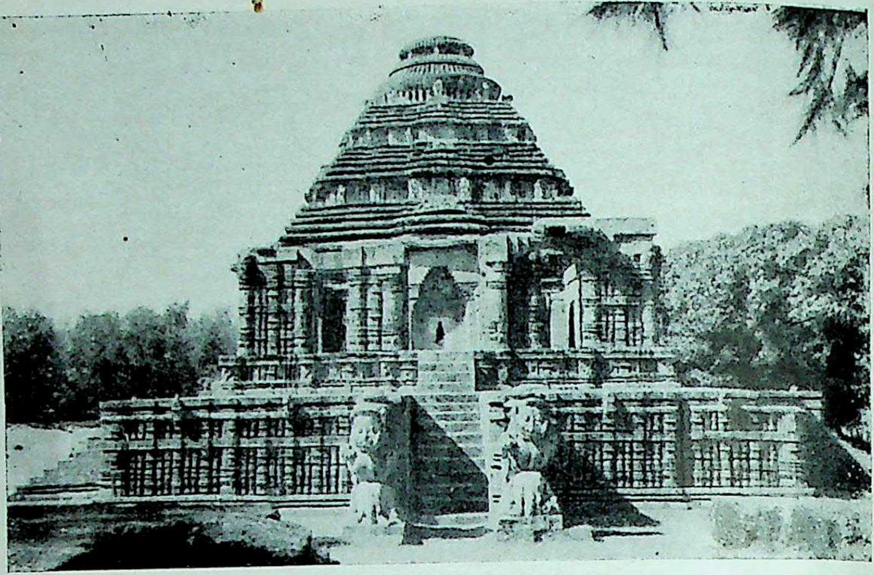


11. *The Sacred Pool, Amarkantak.*

PLATE VII

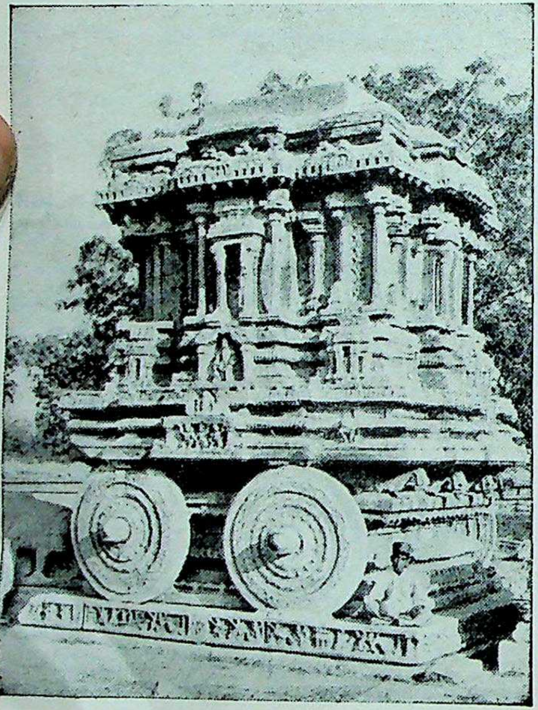


12. *Patalesvara Temple, Amarkantak.*

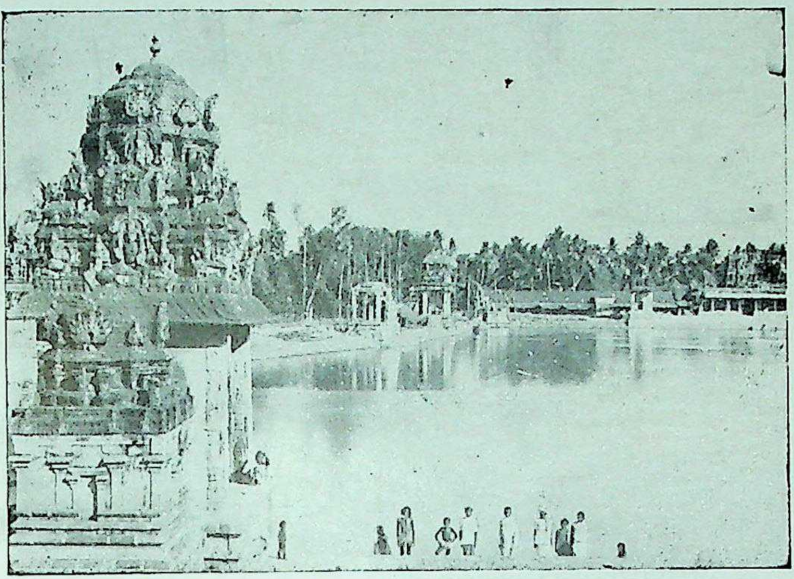


13. *Sun Temple, Konarak.*

PLATE VIII



14. *Stone Ratha, Vijayanagar.*



15. *The Great Mahamagham Tank, Kumbhakonam.*

16. *Sarangapani Temple, Kumbhakonam.*

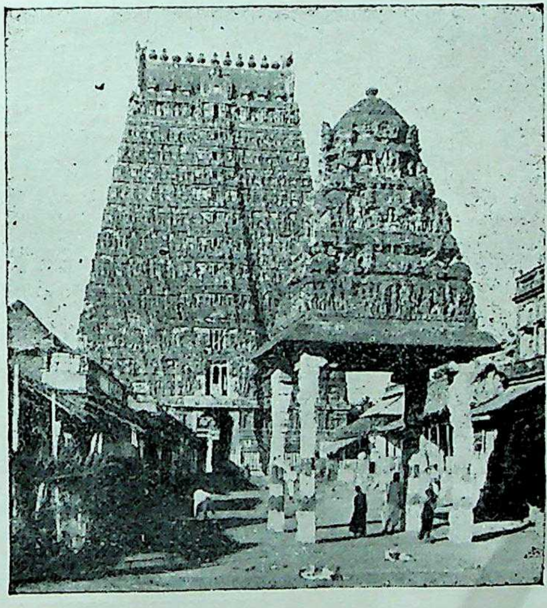
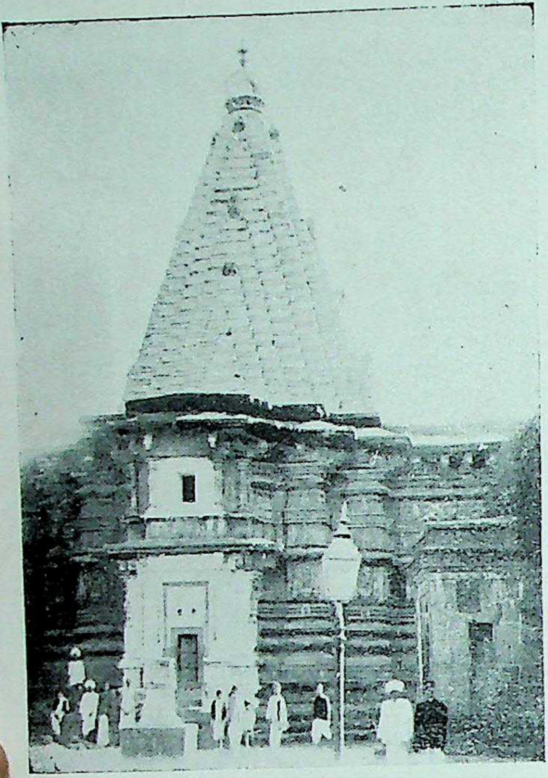
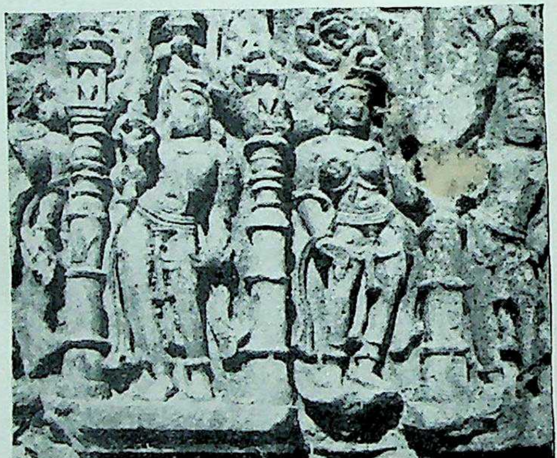


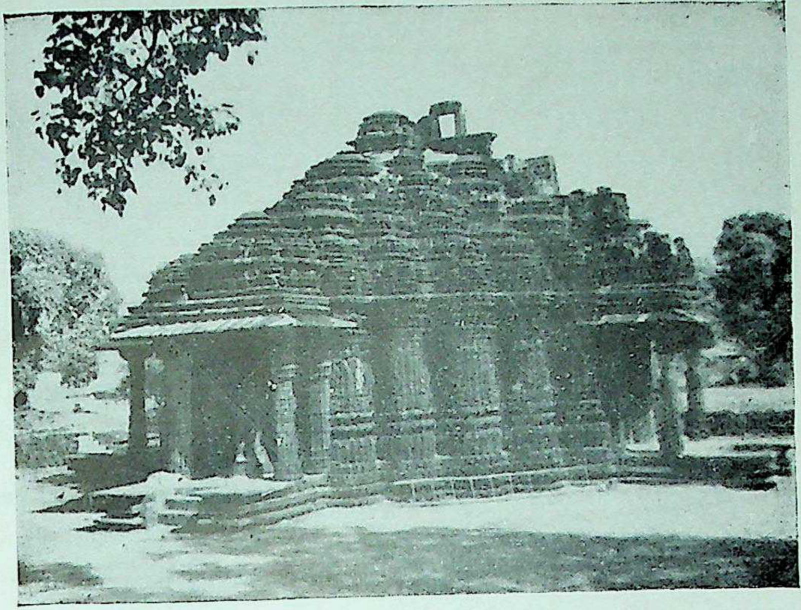
PLATE X



17. *Ambabai's Temple Kolhapur.*

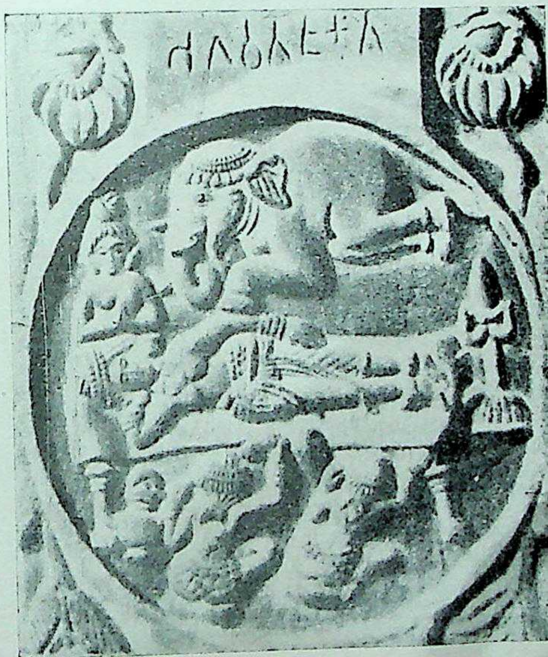


18. *A panel of exquisite figures, Ambarnath.*

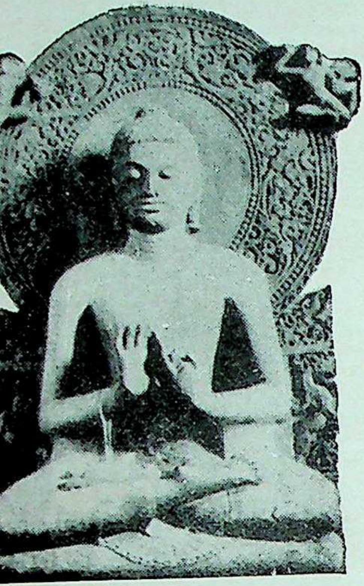


19. *Temple of Ambarnath, Ambarnath.*

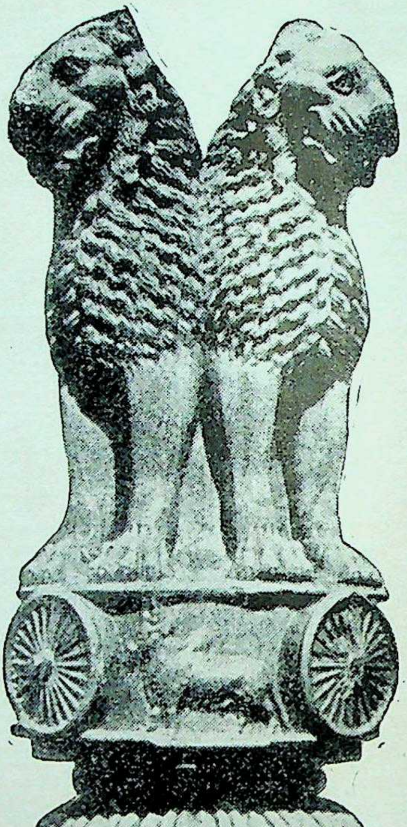
PLATE XI



20. *Dream of Mayadevi, Kapilavastu.*

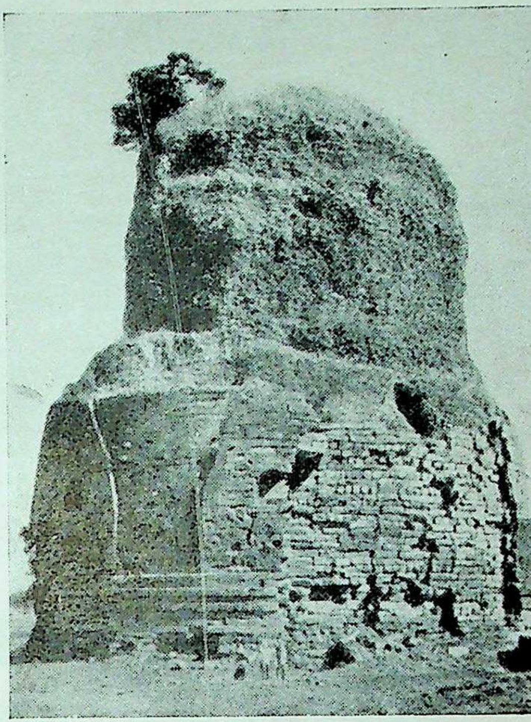


21. *Buddha in his Dharma-chakra Mudra, Sarnath.*

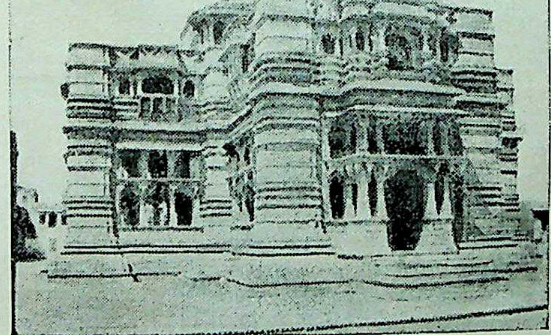


22. *Lion Capital, Sarnath.*

PLATE XIII



23. *Dhamekh stupa, Sarnath.*



24. *Govindaraja's Temple, Brindavan.*

25. *The Pillar of Triumph of Rana Kumbha, Chitor.*

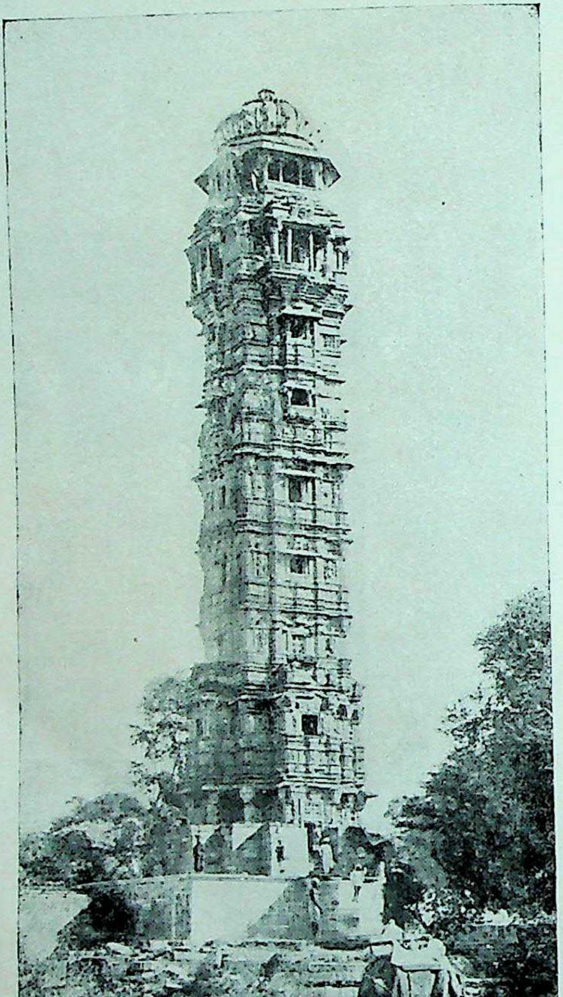
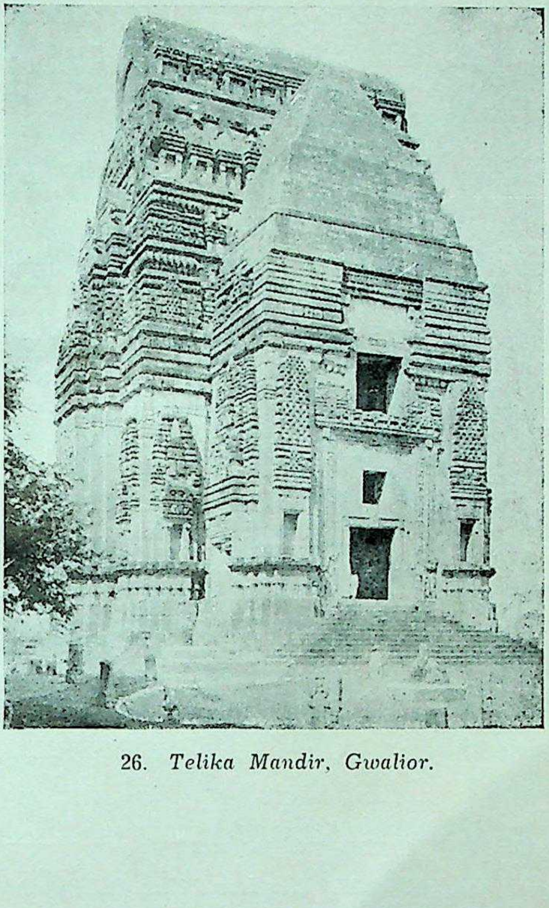
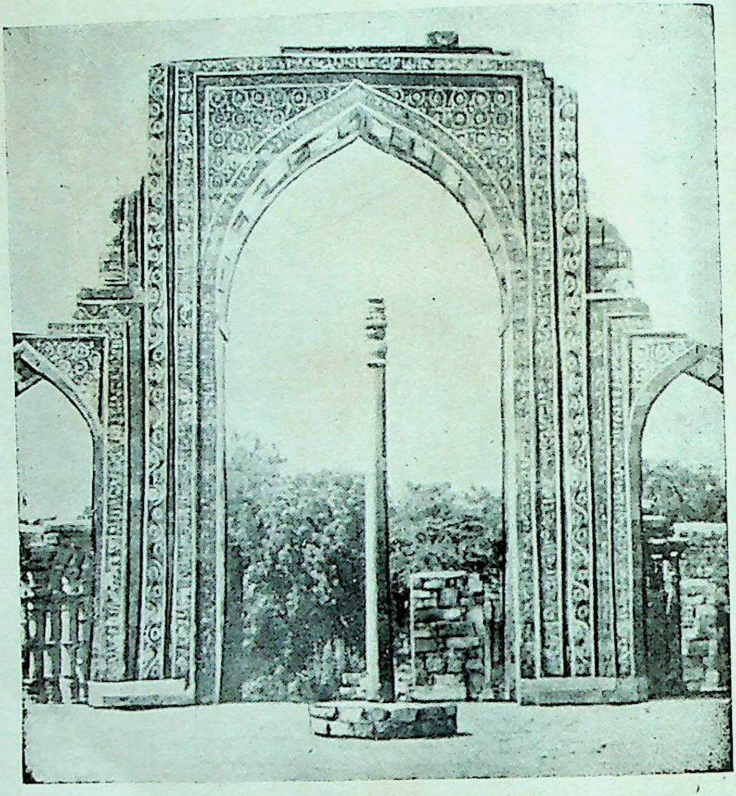


PLATE XV



26. *Telika Mandir, Gwalior.*

PLATE XVI



27. *The Iron Pillar, Indraprastha.*

THE AUTHOR

Versatile writer, noted scholar and leading Advocate of the Bombay Bar, Shri Jayantkrishna H. Dave, M.A., LL.B., had a brilliant academic career winning many a coveted prize. He had his legal training as a Junior under Shri K. M. Munshi. He was for some time Chief Justice in the Banswara State of Rajasthan. His great erudition in Sanskrit and Dharmasastras has made him an authority on Hindu Law. He has critically edited an erudite work on Dharma Sastra, *Vyavahara Prakasa* of Prithvichandra. Presently he is a Member of the Senate of the Bombay University, and part-time Professor of Hindu Law in the Law College, Bombay. Shri Dave is *qui vive* to the cause of Sanskrit. He is a Member of the Central Board of Sanskrit Studies constituted by the Government of India as per the recommendations of the Sanskrit Commission of which also he was a Member. He is also the Honorary General Secretary of the Sanskrit Vishva Parishad, Honorary Director of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and Managing Editor, *Bhavan's Journal*, *Bharati* and *Bharatiya Vidya*. He had been Secretary of the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad for more than twelve years. His articles on '*Immortal India*' in the *Bhavan's Journal* have been widely appreciated. They are now collected in book form in four volumes, two of which are already published.